# TELOS

Number 24 Summer 1975

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**TELOS**

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# TELOS

## a quarterly journal of radical social theory

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# *The Concrete Totality and Lukács' Concept of Proletarian* Bildung

by James Schmidt [1]

A truly critical Marxian analysis of society does not appear full blown in the thunderclap of a *coupure epistémologique*, leaving all previous efforts at critical reflection on the far side of the "ideology"-"science" opposition. Rather, as a determinate, historical negation of the self-understanding achieved at those moments of bourgeois social theory's most incisive insights into the limits of its society, it reaches its "new continent of thought" at least in part by vehicles from the old world. It should not be surprising then that those Marxists who have clearly perceived the specificity of Marx's achievement have also often been equally sensitive towards this exploration of the limits of bourgeois thought which has taken place in the finest products of classical liberal social theory.

An appreciation of the dependence of critical social theory on liberal social theory is understandably obscured in a situation like that of the present where liberal social theory seems in all fields to be fleeing from its earlier critical insights.[2] Hence the present task is not so much an *Aufhebung* of classical liberal social theory as an attempt to understand what tensions and contradictions are repressed by the gleeful consciousness of social technologies which have long put aside a theoretical analysis of the problems of the social totality for piecemeal instrumental interventions.[3] First we must wrestle the tragic consciousness of Weber, Simmel, Freud, etc., away from those contemporary theories which raise these thinkers to the status of "founding fathers" with the very same motion that reduces their critical achievements to a "prescientific" apprehension of social reality which the relentless progress of the social sciences has now left behind. Once they have been saved from this cynical deification, we may be able to understand the tasks which their works pose for a critical Marxist social theory.

This essay, which forms a first step towards an analysis of Lukács' theoretical journey from neo-Kantian social theory to Marxism which draws its inspiration from such reflections, is an attempt to indicate the extent to which an understanding of Lukács' argument in *History and Class*

1. I would like to thank Andrew Arato and Paul Breines for their kind encouragement and aid in the writing and revision of this manuscript.

2. Russell Jacoby has termed this process "social amnesia" and has examined concrete features of the process within psychology in *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing* (Boston, 1975). Since a hypostatization of this category to other fields without an equally exhaustive analysis would be a violation of Jacoby's own procedures, what is needed is further studies of conformist tendencies in other disciplines which, taken together, might illuminate the falling rate of cognition which contemporary social theory manifests.

3. The dynamic was already apparent to Marx in his distinction between classical and vulgar political economy, *Capital* I (Moscow, 1971), p. 85.

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*Consciousness* is predicated on a perception of the problems which had been posed to him during his studies with Georg Simmel in Berlin (1909-1910).[4] This strikes me as a necessary project since there is a tendency to view Lukács' relationship to his neo-Kantian past either in terms of a complete break or in terms of a continuance of a "romantic Marxism" throughout his life.[5] Both fail to appreciate the specific contribution which Lukács makes, the former by neglecting the way in which his later position is a refinement of an already critical attitude towards bourgeois society which can only be appreciated if one understands what aspects of the neo-Kantian position it modifies, the latter by devouring both Lukács and neo-Kantianism under the ready-made terms "romanticism" or "historicism" and by drowning the specific theoretical achievements of both in a sea of superficial parallels.

While it is not possible here to undertaken an analysis of the genesis of certain crucial categories in bourgeois social theory and examine the manner in which they were developed by Simmel, Weber, and others,[6] it is possible (though of course undialectical) to *define* the ways in which two important categories, "totality" and *"Bildung"* had been presented. The choice of these two concepts, as well as the rationale behind the type of classification I am making must, unfortunately, for the present, remain opaque.

I employ the term *Bildung* in the broad sense in which it entered German philosophical discourse at the end of the eighteenth century: as the process by which an individual is "formed" or "cultivated" within a social collectivity.[7]

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4. The limited and provisional nature of this study must be stressed. I have here concentrated only on the influence of Simmel and have ignored the extended development of the arguments of Lask and Weber in these early works. Also, I have totally neglected the 1910-14 *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst* (*Werke* 16) (Neuwied, 1974), which sheds important light on the concept of *Sphärenphilosophie*, which I mention here only in passing.

5. For an example of the first, see Gareth Stedman Jones, "The Marxism of the Early Lukács," *New Left Review* 70 (1971), pp. 33ff., which locates the final break (in a rather tendentious argument) with Lukács' *Lenin*. The other tendency, which infests some of the more popular presentations of Lukács, may be found in Alasdair MacIntyre, "Marxist Face and Romantic Mask," in *Against the Self Image of the Age* (London, 1971), and, to a certain extent (despite the use of an argument for a number of discrete stages), in Neil McInnes, "Georg Lukács," *Survey* 72 (Summer 1969), and more vividly in McInnes, "The Young Marx and the New Left," *Journal of Contemporary History* VI:4 (1971), which argues that Lukács distorted Marx's social theory into the language of "absolute idealism," setting the stage for a union with German anti-scientific irrationalish which resulted in a " 'fascist' style of New Left theorizing," pp. 154-55. McInnes' opposition of Marx's "pro-science" attitude to Lukács' "anti-science romanticism" suffers from a failure to undertake a serious investigation of what either of these labels gloss.

6. Andrew Arato, "The Neo-Idealist Defense of Subjectivity," *Telos* 21 (1974), attempts this task for the category of "subject." I have attempted to do the same for *"Bildung"* and "totality" in Simmel in *From Tragedy to Dialectics: On the Theoretical Significance of Lukács Path from Simmel to Marx* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, MIT, 1974), chapters 2 and 3.

7. The discussion which follows is based on Hans Weil, *Die Entstehung des deutschen Bildungsprinzips* (Bonn, 1967, 2nd ed.). This helpful work does not, however, attempt to link these issues of the philosophy of pedagogy (broadly defined) to classical social theory. For an interesting attempt in that general direction, cf. George Armstrong Kelly, *Idealism, Politics and History* (Cambridge, 1969).

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Hans Weil notes a basic divergence in early uses of the term between seeing it as a process of "making into an image" ("*Bildung als zum Bilde machen*") and as a process of the "cultivation of pregiven faculties" ("*Bildung als Ausbildung vorgegebener Anlagen*"). The first view, which can be associated with that of Anthony Shaftesbury, argues for a development of individuals under the guidance of a transcendent goal, in his case, the ideal of the "gentleman," while the second view, which was developed by Herder after his encounter with Rousseau's works, reverses the emphasis and makes primary not an imported societal ideal, but rather the "natural" potentialities of the individual. In Simmel, as in Hegel, one can find a third alternative, which I will call the "dialectical" conception of *Bildung*. Here, an attempt is made to suppress both the interference of an external ideal *and* the postulation of a linear unfolding of pregiven faculties. In their place *Bildung* is conceived as a process of externalizations and recoveries within a socio-cultural milieu which is both constituted by the subject (qua externalization) and constitutive of the subject (qua recoveries of these collective objectifications). Hence, to employ Simmel's words, the process of cultivation is "the path from closed unity through unfolded multiplicity to unfolded unity" which serves as a means of transforming pure subjectivity into "subjektive Geist" through the mediation of the cultural objectifications of "objektive Geist."[8] *Bildung* here is dependent on the quality of the social milieu, which Simmel argued was no longer capable of fulfilling this task.

From the above it can be seen that the problem of *Bildung* poses rather clearly the problem of mediation between individuals and the social whole. In a much more abstract form this question reappears when we examine the various philosophical conceptions of totality which have been offered by classical bourgeois philosophy. Although I am obviously flirting with a tendency towards Hegelian triadic architectonics, again three main notions may be found.[9]

1. The atomistic conception which employs "totality" (if indeed it uses it at all) as a nominalist convention for designating the aggregate of discrete particular elements or facts;

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8. Georg Simmel, "Der Begriff und die Tragödie der Kultur," in Simmel, *Philosophische Kultur* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 274, 256. The translation of this essay by K. Peter Etzkorn in Simmel, *The Conflict in Modern Culture and Other Essays* (New York, 1968) is often insensitive to Simmel's Hegelian nuances. Cf. also "Von Wesen der Kultur," trans. D.N. Levine as "Subjective Culture" in Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms* (Chicago, 1971). For an able summary of Simmel's writings in this area see Rudolph Weingartner, *Experience and Culture: The Philosophy of Georg Simmel* (Middletown, Conn., 1962), pp. 71ff.

9. The following discussions are my own versions of those developed by Karel Kosik in *Die Dialektik des Konkreten,* trans. from the Czech by Marianne Hoffman (Frankfurt, 1967), pp. 45-46 and Bertell Ollman, "Marxism and Political Science," *Politics and Society* III (1973), pp. 491ff. A further discussion of Kosik's analysis may be found in Paul Piccone, "Dialectical Logic Today," *Telos* 2 (1968), pp. 38ff. Again, it must be stressed that this distinction is a rather abstract one generated solely out of a concern for displaying alternative ways of posing whole-part mediations.

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2. The formalist or organicist-dynamist conception which formalizes the whole and raises the priority of the whole to a position of domination over the parts which appear as individuations constituted by the mechanisms of the whole;

3. The dialectical conception which sees reality as a structured, self-unfolding and forming whole, which can only be apprehended by the construction of a concrete totality which investigates the whole in terms of concrete particulars whose mediations reveal the structure of the whole. The specific features of this final notion of totality cannot be appreciated by an outline as schematic as this, and only a study of the way in which it arises out of an attempt to overcome the limitations of the first two notions will enable us to come to a better understanding of what it entails. Hence it is necessary to embark on a comparison of Lukács' various formulations, not out of a desire to reduce his insights to the level of "influences" of teachers, but rather as a way of seeing how his own theoretical development was driven by a constant confrontation with the inadequacies of non-dialectical conceptions of *Bildung* and totality. In a sense one can find the legacy of Lukács' inheritance from the neo-Kantian tradition summarized in his 1918 *Nachruf* for Georg Simmel,[10] and a brief survey of this text can serve as an introduction to Lukács' own struggles with the problem of totality and *Bildung*.

Lukács begins his eulogy by noting that Simmel had an ambiguous effect on his students. Despite the fact that "all of the truly philosophically talented of the younger generation of thinkers" had "for a shorter or longer time lain under the spell of this thought," he left no school of followers. Thus Simmel must be viewed, according to Lukács, as an *Uebergangerscheinung*—a transitional figure—who, although a great stimulus, is in essence an individual who brings a line of thought to its culmination rather than bringing new insights which can be developed further.[11] Using the terminology employed in Simmel's studies of Rembrandt, Lukács likens Simmel's philosophy to "impressionism," in that it "perceived and valued the great, solid, and internal forms as administrators of life," but states that Simmel is "a Monet" who has yet to be followed by "a Cezanne."[12] The need for a Cezanne is great, since the forms themselves have become problematic. Impressionism can no longer be content merely to reproduce forms, but rather must become "a protest of life against forms which numb it..." and hence implicitly, a rejection of the first *Bildung* model noted above. But

10. This obituary has not been analyzed extensively, though Breines discusses it briefly in "Introduction to Georg Lukács' 'The Old Culture and the New Culture'," *Telos* 5 (1970), p. 8. The obituary appeared in *Pester Lloyd* on Oct. 2, 1918, all citations will be to the reprinting in K. Gassen and M. Landmann, eds., *Buch des Dankes an Georg Simmel* (Berlin, 1958).

11. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 173. Andrew Arato has noted a use of the term, this time with *negative* connotations, in the 1910 *Aesthetic Culture*.

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Lukács argues that the protest against the forms cannot be a mere retreat to a level of unformed experience or a simple appeal to "natural" faculties. Impressionism must give way to "a new classicism, through which sensibility becomes perceptible, rendering eternal the fullness of life in new, strong, but above all, all-encompassing forms."[13] To what, then, does Simmel lead?

Lukács evaluates Simmel's major contribution to philosophy as being less a positive doctrine than a holding action against "a high-tide of the dullest and most soul-less materialism and positivism."[14] By indicating an "unending multiplicity of possible philosophical settings and objects," Simmel managed to avoid a sterile monism and can be seen as the necessary first step toward the "now blossoming neo-idealism."[15] Lukács does not view this tendency to illustrate the unending number of possible positions as merely a destructive relativism, but rather—like Simmel himself—argues that this indication of multiple standpoints is itself the only way to get beyond a rootless and sterile relativism.

Simmel upholds the absoluteness of each separate standpoint, he regards each as necessary and unconditional, only he does not believe that therefore each apriori standpoint can give to the world that totality which life truly embraces. Each offers only an aspect; an apriori and necessary aspect, but still only an aspect and not the totality itself.[16] This doctrine of non-competitive and non-exhaustive forms (which Lukács had developed in a modified form in the Lask-inspired "sphere philosophy" in his Heidelberg Aesthetic) avoids the pitfalls of both atomist and formalist views of the totality, but fails to pose an alternative conception. Reduction to concrete particularity is rejected and forms are given an active, structuring role, but at the same time no attempt is made to reduce all parts to the same formal system. Discourse about totality remains possible since nominalist prohibitions have been rejected, yet a sort of agnosticism prevails with regard to speaking of the totality through any one type of formal operators.

The only sign which Lukács gives which indicates that he also feels Simmel might have something more than a purely negative function is a series of comments on Simmel's concerns with sociological and historical studies. Here, he argues, Simmel was able to make a major contribution. "This specificity of both disciplines [history and sociology—J.S.] is based on a new unity of the interchangeable permeation of heterogeneous standpoints (*wechselseitigen Durchdringung heterogener Standpunkte*), on the interaction of determined and undetermined."[17] As an example of this type of unity, Lukács discusses

13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
16. *Ibid.* A development of this point may be found in Alfred Mamelet, *Le Relativisme philosophique chez Georg Simmel* (Paris, 1914), which in some ways remains the most interesting philosophical introduction to Simmel's work.
17. Gassen and Landmann, p. 175.

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Simmel's *Philosophie des Geldes*, stressing that it is not merely a study in economics, but more of a contribution to neo-Kantian philosophy or social theory. What seems to be important for Lukács here is the two-fold structure of the work, which permits Simmel to talk both of the way money arises out of life-processes and the way in which money in turn influences these same processes. This indicates a way of approaching the totality without simply reducing it to one primary cause. Rather the totality is to be viewed as a network of relations between elements that are both determined and undetermined. There is no way of making this brief argument any clearer, since the text itself is a brief and rather dense statement made only two months before Lukács formalized the shift in his allegiance from neo-Kantian social theory to Marxism by joining the Hungarian Communist Party. However, since theoretical transformations are never as simple as a shift in party allegiances, we will find ample illustrations of what Lukács seems to be driving at if we look to either side of the date in question. In the early pre-Marxist works we find a gradual definition of the tensions which are outlined here in Simmel's work in the form of an almost constant battle within Lukács' studies against an incredible number of dichotomies, all of which seem to be reducible to the central problem of the disjuncture between form and life, but all of which serve to illuminate the later solution of the tension in *History and Class Consciousness* through the use of the "concrete totality."

Since this heightened awareness of the significance of part-whole relations is not present, at least on a conscious level, in the study of the modern drama, we must turn to Lukács' work in aesthetics in the period of this association with Simmel, Weber and Lask to see if while working purely within the realm of the artistic product itself he was able to develop a methodology which would be useful in approaching society itself. I will concentrate on the published works, thus avoiding the very complex arguments which occur throughout the unfinished, and perhaps, unfinishable aesthetic. What is typical of the works throughout this period is that, unlike Simmel, Lukács does not resign himself to the inevitable status of "life" as the unexpressed. Rather, the tension between life and form is maintained and Lukács continually explores both ends of the dilemma tryinig to find a more satisfactory formulation. A maxim which Mészáros states Lukács learned from Simmel and frequently repeated to his own students seems particularly apt in describing Lukács' method over these years: "...do not stop half-way but follow uncompromisingly the idea to its conclusion; the sparks produced by the collision of your head with the wall will show you that you have reached the limits."[18] Lukács was spared neither his head nor the walls.

18. Mészáros, "Lukács' Concept of Dialectic" in Parkinson, ed., *Georg Lukács* (New York, 1970).

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*The Early Aesthetic Works (1908-1918)*

A remarkably consistent theme throughout Lukács' life is his distaste for the unmediated, instantaneous solutions to dialectical tensions proposed by the German romantic tradition. Even in *Die Seele und die Formen* (1911), one of Lukács' most subjective collections of essays, the least sympathetic treatment is given to the *Biedermeier* writings of the German high bourgeoisie[19] and the romantic "panpoeticism" which culminated in Novalis' totally other-worldly life and works.[20] The more affirmative portraits in the book, which takes the form of short essays which "ironically" talk about the "ultimate questions of life but always in the tones as if...speaking of...the inessential and pretty ornaments of the great life,"[21] are of individuals who tried to unite *both* ends of the tension, and tried to account for both *life and form,* rather than opting for formless, incoherent lives or lifeless forms. All are ultimately shown to be failures, but then this book records the sparks produced by heads against walls, rather than a finished synthesis. Kierkegaard tries to integrate "life" and the "Absolute" with the "gesture."[22] Stefan George attempts to create new, integrated forms that will be adequate to his own life, yet winds up tracing a *Bildung* path that leads purely inward; Lukács describes it as "Wilhelm Meister's vagrancy."[23] In Charles-Louis Philippe, Lukács finds a notion of poetry as consisting in a tension between the lyric and epic forms, the first approximation of the schema used in *Theory of the Novel.*[24] And in a remarkable dialogue concerning Laurence Stern, Lukács develops a figure ("Joachim") who is the very prefiguration of Naptha, Thomas Mann's own portrait of Lukács in *The Magic Mountain.* Joachim disrupts a pleasant romantic rumination on the unlimited power of life and the infinite capabilities of the human soul with the forceful and persistent claim that life and art gain definition only through a contradiction with their *limits.*[25] Finally, Lukács' portrait of the critic Rudolph Kassner, which opens the book, contains a passage which summarizes all of the dilemmas of the book in concise fashion. "Kassner sees syntheses only with

19. See the essay on Theodor Storm in Lukács, *Die Seele und die Formen* (Neuwied, 1971), especially the attack on the formalism of bourgeois ethics, p. 84, and the critique of Storm's romanticization of "everydayness," pp. 98ff. Also of importance for later works is the *Roman-Novelle* distinction (p. 108) which foreshadows the discussion of extensive and intensive totality in *Theory of the Novel.*

20. See the Novalis essay in *ibid.,* especially pp. 80-81, for a very ambivalent evaluation of Novalis' work based on an argument that, while Novalis is the most complete expression of the Romantic yearning for a new life, this was only possible because he desired only a "beautiful death" and hence his achievement was a "death-verdict" on the entire school.

21. *Ibid.,* pp. 18-19.

22. *Ibid.,* pp. 44-45. Cf. p. 50 for a very Hegelian critique of Kierkegaard which raises the problem of whether Kierkegaard's decision to see life "without compromise" is not itself a compromise.

23. *Ibid.,* p. 121, cf. p. 120.

24. *Ibid.,* pp . 150-151.

25. Lukács, *Die Seele und die Formen,* p. 213.

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closed eyes; if he looks at the things, he sees so many, so fine details, so much unique that everything comprehended must seem as if a lie, as if a conscious falsification. And then he nevertheless follows his desire, he closes his eyes, in order to see the things comprehended in *Valeurs*, but his honesty forces him forthwith to look at them anew and there they are again separated, isolated, airless."[26]

The sole "synthetic" moment of the book, Lukács' discussion of the "tragic vision" as an ethic for a time in which all immanence has departed from the stage on which life is played out,[27] is shattered almost immediately by the suicide of his close friend Irma Seidler and the failure of his ethic of resignation to a single "caste" in life to deal with the problem of the understanding of the other in an adequate fashion.[28] This "thought exercise," "On the Poverty of Spirit," represents an important phase in Lukács' development since here he confronts the problem of how intersubjective understanding can be possible in a world where the disruption of *Bildung* has taken place. It is interesting that Lukács argues that even if the male protagonist had possessed "Goodness"—the ability to have instantaneous empathetic understanding of the other—it is not at all clear that this would have altered the death of the protagonist's friend by her own hand. "Goodness" plays an interesting role, totally in keeping with Lukács' ethical rejection of capitalism at the end of *Zur Soziologie des modernen Dramas*, in that it functions solely as a *negation* of the assumption that non-communication must be the eternal lot of mankind, while not providing an insurance that it alone could have changed anything. "Goodness is useless, just as it has no foundation. Because consequences lie in the outer world of mechanistic forces—forces that are unconcerned with us—and the motives of our acts come from the bare sign-world of the psyche, from the periphery of the soul."[29] Thus, like the "Hidden God" of the tragic vision, Goodness is never given a positive role to play: what is demanded is the creation of a milieu in which understanding could function in an unambiguous fashion, although this demand is based on the purely negative and powerless fact that understanding was once possible and through Goodness, still is possible, but ineffective.[30]

These ideas reach their fullest expression in *The Theory of the Novel*,

26. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

27. It is impossible to do justice to Lukács' argument here, cf. Lucien Goldmann, *The Hidden God*, trans. Philip Thody (New York, 1964), chapters II-IV.

28. Cf. Agnes Heller, "Von der Armut am Geiste: A Dialogue by the Young Lukács," *Philosophical Forum* III (1972), pp. 360-370, and more broadly, Heller, "Jenseits der Pflicht. Das Paradigmatische der Ethik der deutschen Klassik im oeuvre von Georg Lukács," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 106 (1973).

29. Georg von Lukács, "On Poverty of Spirit," in *Philosophical Forum* III (1972), p. 374. Cf. the essay on Richard Beer-Hoffman in *Die Seele und die Formen*, p. 163, where a distinction is made between simple misunderstanding—i.e., the absence of understanding and the tragedy associated with the fact that "there is never any strength in understanding" even when it is functioning properly.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 373; on the role of the Hidden God as a check on nihilism, see Goldmann, *The Hidden God*, pp. 57-61.

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which was written in the winter of 1914-15 as the introduction to an uncompleted ethical-aesthetic philosophy of history drawing its inspiration from Dostoyevsky.[31] The opening chapters develop a distinction between the "problematic" and "integrated" cultures, the latter being associated with classical antiquity and the medieval church. But, despite the flowery tone of this hymn of praise to the departed glories of *Geschlossenheit*, Lukács states quite definitely that no revival of Greek glories is possible. "Once this unity disintegrated, there could be no more spontaneous totality....any resurrection of the Greek world is a more or less conscious hypostasy of aesthetics into metaphysics—a violence done to the essence of everything that lies outside the sphere of art, and a desire to destroy it; an attempt to forget that art is only one sphere among many, and that the very disintegration and inadequacy of the world is the precondition for the existence of art and its becoming conscious.... A totality that can be simply accepted is no longer given to the forms of art..."[32] This whole dichotomy may be reformulated in terms of the tensions between epic and dramatic forms, a point which Lukács had been developing since the study of the drama. As in the earlier study, the drama is viewed as a merely formal, apriori intensive totality, a collection of conventions and symbols which does not create a real world for living life, but rather is a self-enclosed universe, a "second nature" which is impenetrable by the subject.[33] The epic, on the other hand, had been an extensive totality which includes a world which is not merely a set of formal, constitutive rules but is rather a "concrete totality." "As for the community, it is organic—and therefore intrinsically meaningful—concrete totality; that is why the substance of adventure in an epic is always articulated, never strictly closed;...."[34]

It would not be useful to articulate what Lukács means by "concrete totality" at this point, since its meaning does not seem to be parallel with his later usage. The divergence stems from his connection of the term here with a *primordial, unconscious unity*, while the discussion in *History and Class Consciousness* of the work of art as a concrete totality, as indeed the discussion

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31. The book was first published in the *Zeitschrift für Aesthetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* XI (1916), pp. 225-271 and 390-431, and published in book form only in 1920. See Breines, *Lukács and Korsch* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1972), pp. 83-84, for a discussion of an important note, deleted in subsequent editions, which explains the fragmentary nature of the text and its role as an introduction to "an aesthetic and historical-philosophical study of Dostoyevsky." Its function is that of a negative picture of the world which Dostoyevsky opposes. Cf. also Lukács' 1962 introduction in Lukács, *Die Theorie des Romans* (Neuwied, 1965), trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), and Mészáros, "Lukács Concept...," *op.cit.*, pp. 57-70.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 32, trans. p. 38. Bálázs' diary records the following observation from Lukács in the same period. "...Art is *luciferous*. It makes a better world than God, it creates anticipatory perfection, harmony before salvation," Bela Bálázs, "Notes from a Diary," *New Hungarian Quarterly*, XIII:47 (1972), p. 127.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 62-63, trans. pp. 47, 62-68.

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 41, 66, trans. pp. 47, 67.

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which follows in *Theory of the Novel,* places a greater stress on the concrete totality being the result of the fact that the art work is the *mediated product* of a consciously creating subject, rather than a "spontaneous totality."[35] In any case, Lukács is quite clear that it will not help us a great deal to meditate on the lost glories of the epic: it cannot be written today, since unlike the drama, it requires the support of an integrated community and a life world that has not been totally fragmented and rendered alien. It is no longer a question of an author *choosing* to write one or the other; according to Lukács the epic is simply not a viable artistic style.[36] All that can be done is to make an attempt *within* the realm of a fragmented culture to capture some of the features of the epic, by developing a new art form in opposition to the drama. The dangers of this undertaking lie in the fact that it may substitute, in place of the objective, impenetrable logic of the dramas' "second nature," a merely subjective, internal solution (this dilemma has already been glimpsed in the earlier case of Stefan George, Novalis and the German romantics).[37] This, then, is the difficult task which the novel sets for itself: the "luciferous" imitation within art of a concrete totality, which can make no appeals for aid from a spontaneous objective totality, but which must work through subjective totality towards an objective concreteness.

And, as might be expected, it is with this task that Lukács confronts the problem of *Bildung* head on. What has been ruled out from the start is that the *Bildung* process of the novel can follow the course of the epic, which did not need to confront the problem at all, since all of its characters functioned as completely formed, self-possessed individuals, acting in harmony with others and nature from the very start. In a sense the epic lacks a *Bildung* concept simply because it appears simultaneously as if the *Bildung* processes operated both internally and externally; i.e., each individual unfolds its faculties, but the unfolding of these faculties is predestined to make the individual act in complete conformity with the objective image which functions as the societal norm. There is never a disjuncture between the two senses and hence they probably have no explanatory use whatsoever in approaching the epic.

It is in the novel that all of the classic problems of the *Bildung* dichotomy resurface. His threefold division of solutions to the novel bears a remarkable resemblance both to aspects of our earlier discussion of internal, external and dialectical *Bildung* as well as to Lukács' later critique of syndicalist and revisionist approaches to political practice. The three types which Lukács discusses can be summarized as follows.

1. The novel of "*abstract idealism,*" whose ideal-type representative is *Don*

35. Lukács, *Werke II,* pp. 317-318, *History and Class Consciousness* (hereafter HCC), p. 137.
36. Lukács, *Theory des Romans,* pp. 41, 50, 53, trans. pp. 46, 54, 56.
37. *Ibid.,* pp. 72-73, trans. p. 74.

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*Quixote* and whose specific feature is that the "soul" of the individual is "narrower" than the world. Interaction with the external world is frustrated by this fact and the general form of the novel consists of the soul constantly being thrown back by the world in its attempt to realize an ethical ideal. Thus, the world becomes know to the subject only as an atomized series of forces which frustrate its attempts at imposing its will.[38]

2. The novel of "*romantic disillusionment*" in which the soul is "wider" than the world. Contacts with the world take the form of a mystified reproduction of the entire totality of the world as the subject's creation.[39] The peculiar dialectic involved in this form is not fully developed until Lukács develops Novalis' critique of Goethe in the course of the discussion of the third type.

3. The third variety is an attempt at a synthesis between the two and at one point Lukács terms it "a novel of education" (*Erziehungsroman*). Lukács' description of the goals of this form could easily be interchanged with the description of the "dialectical *Bildung*" of Simmel and Hegel which has been discussed above. Its theme is "the resignation (*Sichabfinden*) of the problematic individual, guided by the lived experience of the ideal, to concrete social reality....reconciliation between interiority and reality, although problematic, is nevertheless possible; ...the soul is not purely self-dependent, its world is not a reality which is, or should be, complete in itself...Such an interiority represents on the one hand a wider and consequently more adaptable, gentler, more concrete idealism, and, on the other hand, a widening of the soul which seeks fulfillment in action, in effective dealings with reality, and not merely in contemplation."[40] The obvious ideal-type is Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*. Virtually all of the moments of the Hegelian and Simmelian *Bildung* theories are present in a condensed form in this description: subject-object tension, the creation of new definitions of reality as the result of those tension, reorientation of self-consciousness after each new meaning is constructed, etc. And like Hegel, it "deals only with ordinary, human things; nature and mysticism are quite forgotten. It is a poeticized story of bourgeois domestic life."[41] But this is Novalis speaking, and not Lukács, and at this point the second round of the battle against romanticism is fought, with Lukács choosing Goethe's bourgeois, acceptance of social reality over Novalis' romantic negation. "Lyrical, mood-dominated romanticizing of the structures of social reality cannot, given the fact that the present state of development lacks pre-stabilized harmony, relate to the essential life of the interiority. Since Novalis rejected Goethe's solution of seeking an ironical, fluctuating balance maintained from the point of view of the subject and touching as little as

38. *Ibid.*, p. 96, 99-100, trans. p. 97, 100-101.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 138, trans. p. 135.
40. *Ibid.*, pp. 135-136, trans. pp. 132-133.
41. Novalis, quoted by Lukács, *ibid.*, p. 143, trans. p. 139.

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possible upon the actual structures of society, no other way was left open to him but to poeticize these structures in their objective existence and to create a world which was beautiful and harmonious but closed within itself and unrelated to anything outside. . . a world which therefore could not become a true totality."[42]

Thus the first two of these attempts culminate in something less than a concrete totality. *Bildung* fails in the first case because on the one hand there is no coherent form in the external world towards which the subject can mold itself (because of the lack of immanent meaning at this historical period) and on the other because the internal image which the subject attempts to force on reality is constantly frustrated by that reality. Hence the subject has contact with a fragmented externality and an internality which takes the form of a battle-scarred ethical ideal. *Bildung* in the second case fails because, once again, on the one hand there is no external image which the subject can absorb. However, since the subject is contemplative and does not actively interact with the world (i.e., its soul is not dependent on the world), it can create a totality of sorts, albeit a purely formal totality which is a mystification of the external incoherence and can be maintained only because the subject does not rejoin the world (hence the significance of Lukács' claim in *Die Seele und die Formen* that Novalis so perfectly realized the romantic ideal simply because his entire life, since the loss of his beloved, was oriented away from the world, towards death).

But what of Goethe's synthesis? Does dialectical *Bildung* succeed in Goethe where it failed in Simmel and became a mystification in Hegel? Apparently not, since the only way in which Goethe can insure the success of the process is through a series of tricks which run parallel to those of the *Phenomenology*. The encounters of the subject and the world need to take place within a rational community which, while affirming the structures of social life as necessary forms of intersubjectivity, nevertheless sees in these forms not a "rigid political and legal being-for-themselves" but rather instruments for aims which lead beyond them.[43] In Simmel's terminology, the structures of the "objektive *Geist*" must serve the end of cultivating a communal "subjektive *Geist*" which will enable the individual to have a contact with objectivity which is not merely that of a natural, animal-like subjectivity confronting an alien objectivity. Lukács recognizes here that Goethe's structure assumes a community of already *gebildete* individuals; individuals who have already created a healthy intersubjectively shared milieu which assures that the "novice" coming into the society will not be faced with impossible tasks, i.e., alienations which could not be overcome. Since there is an assurance on neither the subjective nor objective sides of the interaction which makes *Bildung necessary*, all gains in cultivation are tied to the quality of the

42. *Ibid.*, p. 145, trans. p. 140.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 136-137, trans. pp. 133-134.

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interaction between subject and object, and thus to *the historical milieu* in which the dialectic transpires. Lukács' criticism of Goethe is based on the aesthetic question of the function of various fantastic apparatuses at the conclusion of the test: all-knowing Masonic initiates who direct the progress of the novice, their mysterious tower, etc. Goethe has been much criticized for the introduction of these devices, which derive from the romantic epic form, but Lukács notes that they are *absolutely necessary* for Goethe's novel. "He absolutely needed these methods in order to give sensuous significance (*sinnlichen Bedeutsamkeit*) and gravity to the ending of the novel, and although he tried to rob them of their epic quality by using them lightly and ironically thus hoping to transform them into elements of the novel form, he failed...reality refuses to be forced up to such a level of meaning, and, as with all the decisive problems of great literary forms, no artist's skill is great and masterly enough to bridge the abyss."[44] Thus these devices are interventions on the part of the author which attempt to create a supportive milieu where none is in fact present, just as the various overly simple transitions of the *Phenomenology* (such as the exit from the inverted world, the resolution of the unhappy consciousness, etc.) are not sincerely carried out of necessity within the immanent development of the "consciousness" but only draw their strength from the "we" who is observing the passage of history telling the reader periodically that this means such and such "for us," while for the subject it only appears as this or that. The *Phenomenology* relies on the presumption of a completed dialectic, and when this is called into question, as seems to have been the case with Hegel's struggles in the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel too is forced to introduce "fantastic apparatuses" in the form of the class of bureaucrats who, like Goethe's initiates, intervene in the *Bildung* process at key intervals to assure the passage from objective *Geist* to absolute *Geist*.

I cannot, of course, claim that at this point Lukács had worked out the complete parallel critique of Hegel, although there is no reason to believe that given the critique which has been performed on Goethe he would have any trouble with Hegel's philosophical *Bildungsroman*. What is important to note is that with the critique of Goethe Lukács has *theoretically* reconstructed Marx's insight into the weakness of the *Philosophy of Right*—that it takes the form of a vast mystification of the actual process of historical *Bildung* by elevating the bureaucracy to a position where it can somehow mediate the strife of the civil society. But what *has not been done*, and indeed, will not be done until 1930 when Lukács first reads the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* in Moscow, is a reconstruction of Marx's critique of the *Hegelian dialectic itself*, i.e., the basic mechanism on which the *Bildung* process is constructed.[45] Thus, as a result of his aesthetic studies, Lukács had developed

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147, trans. pp. 143-143.
45. Lukács, *Werke II*, pp. 38-39, HCC, p. xxxvi, discusses the impact of the Manuscripts

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a critique of two forms of *Bildung* which could later be easily transformed into a critique of revisionism and syndicalism as revolutionary tactics. He had also absorbed enough of the dialectical concept of *Bildung* through Simmel, Hegel, and Goethe, to be in a position to see the extent to which it was limited by being predicated upon a satisfactory cultural milieu, a milieu which did not seem present and hence invalidated the process of *Bildung* by forcing it to fragment between objective culture and subjective culture (as in Simmel) or of human history (as in Goethe and Hegel). Hence, when with the Russian and Hungarian revolutions a "window on the future" was opened for Lukács in the form of a change in the milieu, it is not surprising that he began working on a social and political level with the dialectical *Bildung* system which he had explored for the ten previous years.

### *Lukács' Early Formulation of the Concrete Totality*

It is somewhat artificial to divide Lukács' work of the period 1919-23 into two periods, since even though *History and Class Consciousness* does not appear until the end of the period, it is made up of essays which in one form or another had existed in some cases since 1919 and in most cases since 1920-21. But while there is no radical break to be found in this period, there is a gradual development of a more complex notion of the totality, which does not reach its most explicit formulation until the reification chapter of 1922 and the review of Lassalles' letters of 1924.[46] An almost organic growth took place in the concept of concrete totality in these years, and in order to indicate what changes this involved I am forced to make an overly sharp distinction between the earliest and latest works in the series. The greatest problem, of course, is with the works in the middle of the development which constitute the bulk of *History and Class Consciousness*. Since many of these were rewritten for publication in that book, I will lump them with the rest of the 1922 works, and for polemical purposes compare them with a 1919 essay which, though foreshadowing many of the themes of the reification chapter, was never republished.[47] The main point behind this admittedly arbitrary decision is that I feel it can be shown that Lukács' first approaches to the problem of the concrete totality and the task of *Bildung* in an unalienated culture are basically direct transfers of the theoretical framework worked out at Heidelberg and Berlin. While this direct transfer is possible when a suitable milieu exists, i.e., when the Hungarian Soviet Republic exists, Lukács must later reformulate the issues after its collapse.[48]

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on Lukács. A full discussion of their importance would require an examination of Lukács' later arguments in *Ontologie: Arbeit* (Neuwied, 1973) and *Ontologie: Marx* (Neuwied, 1972).

46. All of the chapters of *History and Class Consciousness* are claimed to have been previously written except for the reification chapter and "Towards a Methodology of the Problem of Organization." However, some of the rewriting—especially in the opening chapter—is so extensive that there is little resemblance between the final and original forms.

47. Lukács, "The Old Culture and the New Culture," trans. Paul Breines, *Telos* 5 (1970), pp. 21ff.

48. I will not attempt to connect the gradual shift in his notion of the concrete totality with

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The major activity which Lukács was engaged in in the period immediately prior to the Soviet Republic was a Sunday afternoon group which became nicknamed "Szellemkék" ("sprites") because of its obsession with "spirit" (*szellem*—equavalent to *Geist*).[49] This group soon expanded its activities into a "Free School for Studies of the Human Spirit" which offered a series of lectures and courses in 1917-18.[50] Some idea of the aims which this school sought to realize may be obtained by examining Karl Mannheim's opening address for the lecture series of the school's second semester and the lecture series outline which accompanied it when it was published as a pamphlet the next year.[51] The presentation makes frequent use of Simmel's objective culture-subjective culture split as a means of analyzing the ills of the time and proposes that the task of the school should be an attempt to provide a point of attraction (*Anziehungspunkt*) for those who wish to obtain a unified insight into the objective culture and thus be able to absorb this into their own subjective cultivation.[52] In other words, the free school was an attempt to provide a milieu within which some reclamation of the objective spirit could take place: its function was that of the "mysterious tower" of *Wilhelm Meister* although now no longer carried out merely in a novel, but brought down into history. It is not clear how seriously Lukács was committed to this venture, since in 1970 he wrote that even at the time "It did not really mean anything important to me since it was essentially linked to a way of thinking and acting that I had already gotten over."[53] In any case, the program is consistent with the type of political program which conceivably could be derived from a Simmelian analysis of the cultural crisis. But with the changes in the external milieu, Lukács apparently reached a decision that it might now be possible to carry out a more ambitious program of social transformation, and officially aligned himself with the MKP in mid-December.

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the alterations in his conception of the party, although this does seem to be a promising and challenging issue. Nor will I discuss here Lukács' activities during the Hungarian Soviet Republic, since this has already been done in Rudolph L. Tökés, *Bela Kun and the Hungarian Soviet Republic* (New York, 1967), and David Kettler, "Culture and Revolution," *Telos* 10 (1971).

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-58. Kettler states that there were weekly meetings at the home of Bela Balázs, a writer who was one of Lukács' closest friends. Clearly, Lukács could not have attended all of these meetings, since he lived in Heidelberg for a time in 1916 and again in 1917 before his final return at the end of 1917.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

51. Karl Mannheim, "Seele und Kultur," trans. Ernst Mannheim in Karl Mannheim, *Wissenssoziologie: Auswahl aus dem Werk*, ed. Kurt H. Wolff (Neuwied, 1964), pp. 66ff. For commentaries, see Kurt H. Wolff, "Introduction" in Wolff, ed., *From Karl Mannheim* (New York, 1971), pp. xiv-xvi, and Kettler, *op.cit.*, pp. 60-68.

52. Mannheim, *op.cit.*, p. 67, cf. pp. 66, 69, 70, 74-75 for citations of Simmel's work on culture or closely related arguments. Also interesting is the discussion of Lukács, *Geschichte des Dramas* (History of the Drama), as an example of a fruitful application of Marxism to the analysis of the arts (p. 81).

53. Quoted in Ferenc Tökei, "Lukács and Hungarian Culture," in *New Hungarian Quarterly*, XVII:47 (1972), p. 115.

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The great weakness of *Tactics and Ethics,* Lukács' discussion of the March 1919 merger of the Hungarian Social-Democrat and Communist parties, lies in the fact that it merely *assumes* that a proper milieu for cultural restoration is present. Given this assumption, many of Lukács' previously unrealizable theories are called into action. The Marxist analysis of class structure from the modern drama study is no longer tied to an ethical rejection of capitalist society, but rather is now vindicated by the Soviet Republic, and hence once again operative. And the dialectical concept of *Bildung* which had been denied any effectiveness in the study of Goethe, now is applicable without alteration, since a new community has the potential for being realized. These problems appear on two levels of the work, first in the absence of a clearly defined notion of totality as an analytic category and secondly in the absence of any alteration in the Simmel-Hegel *Bildung* theory except for the fortuitous removal of the previously present blockages.[54]

The problem of the underdevelopment of the notion of concrete totality may be seen by examining the 1919 version of "What Is Orthodox Marxism?" an essay which in revised form would become the opening chapter of *History and Class Consciousness.* Lukács' approach to the primary aspects of Marx's method centers around an argument that Marx sees a predominance of the whole over the parts. "...the following fundamental principle of the dialectical method, the theory of the Hegelian concrete concept...means that the whole takes precedence over the parts, *that the parts must be construed from the whole and not the whole from the parts...* It is this *unconditional hegemony of the totality, of the unity of the whole over the abstract isolation of the parts, which constitute the essence of Marx's social theory, the dialectical method...*"[55] Explained in this manner, it is not at all clear that Lukács' has succeeded in distinguishing what I term the "formalist" totality from the concrete totality. Nevertheless, Lukács does seem to want to move towards such a distinction, and argues that the categories employed in the totality which Marx analyzes must possess the same type of self-negating behavior which takes place within the dialectical conception of *Bildung.* "Only the dialectical method of Marx makes it possible to view social phenomena in this way: to recognize first, that they are necessary, and secondly that they are at the same time also transient and destined to perish. Both points of view are crucial: the former as a guard against the abstract Utopianism to which all petty-bourgeois social reformers incline; the latter as a corrective to the over-estimation of the power and indispensibility of the given institutional orders which characterizes the vulgar Marxists..."[56] What

54. Both of these "weaknesses" may have been unavoidable. As Kettler argues, it is probably only in hindsight that the revolution appears doomed, since at the time there was a general expectation, even within segments of the bourgeois press, that the supportive European revolution was imminent.

55. Lukács, "Tactics and Ethics," *Werke II,* pp. 64, 67, trans. in *Political Writings,* pp. 22, 24.

56. *Ibid.,* p. 67, PW, p. 25.

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is being assumed here is that the diachronic movement of the social totality is capable of reproducing something other than the arrangement of social forms which had been uncovered at the synchronic level. Hence there must be some type of historical analysis which will not simply terminate with the lifeless forms which had been previously analyzed through Simmel's atemporal essential analysis, but rather will bring some new type of formation into play. But this is no longer formulated as a purely apocalyptic hope and Lukács apparently wants to argue that the possible future alteration builds upon the present stage of social formation. Thus there must be a way of looking at society which analyzes present forms as necessary and real arrangements of social forces, yet which sees these forces altering. This much is implicit in the fact that Lukács apparently feels that dialectical *Bildung* is now possible again. But there is no discussion of how Marxism, as a theoretical reconstruction of a concrete totality, can make this claim. For all of the importance given to the Marxist method, Lukács has not at this point given an adequate explanation of its procedures.

There is one other text from this general period which should be examined so as to provide a sharper contrast between Lukács' early Marxist works and the formulations of *History and Class Consciousness*: "The Old Culture and the New Culture." The work was written during the Hungarian Soviet Republic and republished in German the following year while Lukács was in exile in Vienna. "The Old Culture and the New Culture" is interesting in that it represents one of Lukács' first explorations of the problem of reification since *Zur Soziologie des modernen Dramas*. There is a remarkable consistency with his earlier analysis, even to the point of discussing the separation of economic reality and ideology in terms of a "form-content" split and a use of the appropriately Simmelian notion of "fashion" as a key to the dynamics of a waste producing market.[57] Also present is his earlier argument from the study of Theodor Storm, that the basis of social organization in capitalist society has been directed towards the accumulation of value, rather than towards the ends of human cultivation.[58] But what is new is the view that the phenomena which have been analyzed in terms of the decay of culture and the resultant fragmentation of social reality are not merely a new state of affairs to be bemoaned, but rather the indication of a basic instability in the entire rule of the bourgeoisie: "the starting point of the following set of ideas is the view that *the culture of the capitalist epoch had collapsed in itself and prior to the occurence of economic and political breakdown*. Therefore, in opposition to the anxieties [of the bourgeoisie], it is a necessity, precisely in the interests of opening the way to the new culture, to bring the long death process of capitalist society to its completion."[59]

57. Lukács, "The Old Culture and the New Culture," pp. 25-26, 24.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 22. Cf. Lukács, *Die Seele und die Formen*, pp. 83, 85-86.
59. Lukács, "The Old Culture and the New Culture," p. 22.

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This formulation of the breakdown of *Bildung* thus stands in an uneasy position between Lukács' earlier cultural pessimism and his views of *History and Class Consciousness,* and it is a moot point if this represents a failure of theoretical insight or whether at this point Lukács simply did not express the complete argument which lies behind the position. On the one hand, Lukács has accepted a basic definition of the ills of capitalist reality which is framed within the general terminology of his early *Kultur*-critique. On the other hand, he has begun to attempt to connect this with both a future economic reorganization of society (the "new culture") and a coming series of economic disorders within the present culture. What is needed is a link to the arguments about the limits of proletarian consciousness which are made in the March 1920 study of class consciousness which is reprinted in *History and Class Consciousness.* This is accomplished through the chapter on reification in *History and Class Consciousness* which draws its analytic power from the successful resolution of the question of the nature of totality which has been accomplished in the rewriting of the first chapter.

Thus, in summary, the works of the period immediately connected with the Soviet Republic represent in many ways a continuance of the basic arguments of the pre-Marxist period, but now "turned on their heads." Whereas before the proper milieu had been missing within which a dialectical *Bildung* process could again be put into operation, with the revolution, Lukács assumes that this theoretical framework can become functional. With the works of exile we begin to get a second analysis of *Bildung* processes in a hostile milieu, but at this point Lukács can no longer simply return to his previous practice of essentially leaving the future of the fragmented culture an open question through ethical devices such as the "Hidden God" or the notion of "Goodness." In *History and Class Consciousness* an analysis takes place of the tensions which act as restraints on *Bildung* and an effort is made to formulate an analysis of the process necessary to remove these blockages and once again make culture possible.

### Bildung *and Totality in* History and Class Consciousness

In *History and Class Consciousness* we find Lukács' final reformulation of the concept of dialectical *Bildung* and at the same time his most complete discussion of the nature of Marx's use of the category of "concrete totality." These are both fused by a discussion of the role of theory in connection with revolutionary practice which finally binds together the various diverse threads of Lukács' early political writings into a unified presentation. Whether the difference in theoretical sophistication was a result of a change in outlook as a result of the collapse of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, or whether in Vienna Lukács simply had the time to make explicit what had been the implicit rationale behind his earlier arguments is a point which admits of no definitive answer. In any case, for all of its appearances of being a fragmentary, poorly connected collection of essays, *History and Class Consciousness,* as Lukács

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himself argued in the preface to the first edition, "does have a definite unity" even if the presentation does not yield a "scientific system."[60] In attempting to follow the argument on the nature of the concrete totality and its relationship to the problem of *Bildung* in pre-revolutionary society, I will first examine the way in which Lukács now presents the tensions which the category of concrete totality is intended to overcome theoretically and then turn to a discussion of the types of methodological operations which Lukács feels are the essentials of Marx's method. Finally, I will turn to a discussion of the analysis of reification and indicate what role the proletariat plays as an element of society whose *Bildung*, if followed to its possible conclusion, would bring about a significant alteration in the structure of the culture of the entire society. Such a discussion cannot, of course, claim to do justice to the complexity and the richness of a book such as *History and Class Consciousness* and what is written here should be read more as a way of *approaching* a text than as an attempted summary.

A useful way of approaching Lukács' conception of the totality in this work is to note that oppositions similar to those in his early works are again posed, the difference being that they are now personified as partial or superficial political or theoretical positions which Marxism must overcome. He frequently argues that apparently contradictory tendencies within a political philosophy or a method of research are in fact both manifestations of the same level of analysis. For instance, in discussing the approaches of bourgeois historians, Lukács notes a tendency to see the objects of study as transhistorical forms on the one hand or to attempt to account for historical change on the basis of an appeal to the "great man." "In the first case it ceases to be possible to understand the *origin* of social institutions. The objects of history appear as the objects of immutable, eternal laws of nature. History becomes fossilized (*erstarrt*) into a *formalism* incapable of comprehending that the real nature of socio-historical institutions is that they consist of *relations between men*... In the second case, history is transformed into the irrational rule of blind forces which is embodied at best in the 'spirit of the people' or in 'great men.' It can therefore only be described pragmatically but it cannot be rationally understood (*vernünftig begriffen*)."[61] Thus the limit of bourgeois rationality is a purely formal understanding of reified relations, while any type of change must be attributed to the irrational intervention of forces which cannot be understood. There is a remarkable parallel to the situation in Lukács' early thought as well as to the basic dilemma of forms and life in Simmel. Both distinguish between a static, comprehensible totality,

60. Lukács, *Werke II*, p. 163, HCC, p. xli.

61. Lukács, *Werke II*, p. 221, HCC, pp. 48-49, the last phrase, *"vernünftig begriffen"* is rich in Hegelian associations, since Hegel views the goal of the *Phenomenology* as a demonstration that Reason (*Vernunft*) and the history which is understood in the progress of the *Begriff* (Concept) can be equated. For a related criticism of bourgeois historians, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 336-337, HCC, pp. 153-154.

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which remains synchronically invariant and which is the inevitable result of any conceivable diachronic process; yet at the same time both insist that something is left out of this petrified world. For Simmel this is "life" itself, which increasingly plays a dominant role in his later works, while for Lukács the irrational element which remains outside of the frozen totality is a purely inexplicable ethical rejection: "Goodness," or "The Hidden God." It should be noted, however, that if Lukács and Simmel represent the "both-and" of this dichotomy, Lukács seems to be suggesting here that in a less subtle approach to history, one might find a shuffling back and forth between the two poles of the dichotomy, or an exclusive concentration on one side or the other.

This same problem reemerges in political economy by virtue of the fact that from the standpoint of the bourgeois political economist, one can only observe individual, isolated manufacturers and overpowering "supra-personal 'laws of nature'."[62] Here, once again, we have a transfer of an earlier argument to the sphere of economic analysis. The notion of "second nature" which had previously been employed in the *Theory of the Novel* to denote the world of reified conventions which have become impenetrable to the individual subject, has been used in the present case to analyze the problem of a science which cannot integrate the individual and the general because it fails to transcend the limits of a view that takes in only atomized objects or independent formal structures. The argument seems to give political economists the credit of being unable to sink back to the either-or choice of the historians, but nevertheless notes that the dichotomy of form and life has only been reproduced here in economic terminology, but not transcended.

The clearest and most significant explorations of these types of dichotomous approaches are those associated with Lukács' critique of revisionism and voluntarism. This is one of the earliest formulations of the dichotomy in Lukács' Marxist work, a threefold typology of revisionism, fatalism, and voluntarism having been employed in *Tactics and Ethics*. There Lukács noted that in examining the ways in which Kautsky, bourgeois economy and syndicalism have looked at the process by which the proletariat comes to revolutionary consciousness, one finds the following misinterpretations of the process: 1) revisionism sees the attainment of revolutionary change as the result of an incremental process which inevitably brings the proletariat to power,[63] 2) bourgeois economy finds any change inexplicable since it sees only a harmonious set of laws of production,[64] and 3) syndicalism sees these same restraints as abstractions alienated from actual life and argues that they can be overthrown immediately by concentrated action.[65] Reformulating these errors in terms of the analysis of *History and Class*

62. *Ibid.*, p. 238, HCC, p. 63.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64, PW, pp. 21-22.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 65, PW, pp. 22-23.
65. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66, PW, p. 23.

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*Consciousness* we find that the revisionists view history solely as a set of simple causal laws from which a new society will be deduced and thus overestimate the extent to which society can be viewed as a formal totality which brings about a new state of affairs by simple diachronic progression; bourgeois economics fails to move beyond a formal conception of the economy as a self-maintaining formalist totality; and syndicalism fails to see that society is not simply an aggregate of atoms whose rearrangement can take place with little or no difficulty.

In the manner in which this is formulated in *Tactics and Ethics*, where the argument is much more condensed than is the case in *History and Class Consciousness*, it is easy to trace the development of each of the analyses. The rejection of revisionism can be found already present in Georg Simmel's comments on historical materialism in *Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*. Simmel castigates the would-be "materialism" of an approach to history which explains all occurrences in terms of the "self-evolution" of economic categories, pointing out that such an assumption is no less metaphysical than any animism which somehow attributes autogenesis to nonhuman objects.[66] What Lukács brings to this discussion is a knowledge that Simmel's critique, though valid for the Marxism of the Second International, is not in fact a critique of Marx's own procedures *per se*. The second two criticisms bear a striking resemblance to Lukács' comments on the various types of *Bildung* schemas present in novels: the bourgeois economists reproduce Novalis' error of merely contemplating a formal totality and thereby lapsing into a static view of reality, while the syndicalists engage in a Quixotic act of running into various parts of the totality without ever coming to grips with the full nature of the system they are confronting.

Lukács' argument in *History and Class Consciousness* elaborates this point, and a full enumeration of the classification scheme he develops would seem to require a recognition that the "atomist"-"wholist" dichotomy needs to be supplemented by a "fatalist-activist" dichotomy. Hence within a world which sees all of reality as determined by overarching formal laws, one can either engage in an activist exploitation of the laws for individual gain, or in a fatalistic resignation to merely internal, ethical rejections. Lukács sees the latter present in the renewed importance of Kantian-type ethical systems within revisionism.[67] Parlimentarian opportunism and ethical purity are seen as lying on the same plane. The point of Lukács' analysis is that these dichotomies: the individual vs. the whole, as well as voluntarism vs. fatalism must be viewed as the consequences of an abstract analysis of the social totality, and thus both sides can be placed on the same level. While this is an important insight, the way in which it is sometimes presented tends to collapse all of these categories much too quickly into an undifferentiated whole. For

66. Simmel, *Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*, 5th ed. (Munich, 1923), p. 215; cf. pp. 207ff.

67. Lukács, *Werke II*, pp. 210-211, HCC, p. 38.

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instance, his failure to make a consistent distinction between the errors which result from atomist totalities and formalist totalities may lie behind his tendency to equate revisionism and positivism as two undifferentiated historical trends.[68] It would seem that a distinction of the sort present in the atomist totality-formalist totality argument would be necessary to distinguish the Second International's use of a formalist determinism from the growing tendency of positivists as early as the empirio-criticism movement to give expressions about the "totality" only the status of nominalist conventions. This distinction is even more crucial today if a critical analysis of the concrete totality is to be distinguished from empiricist analyses on the one hand and formalist structural approaches on the other.

Having examined these theoretical positions to which Lukács is opposed, it is now possible to examine what he claims are the unique features of analysis from the standpoint of the concrete totality. Lukács defines this notion in his rewrite of "What Is Orthodox Marxism?" as follows: "Only in this context which sees isolated facts of social life as aspects of the historical process and integrates them in a *totality*, can knowledge of the facts hope to become knowledge of *reality*. This knowledge starts from simple, pure (to the capitalist world), immediate, natural determinants and progresses from them towards a knowledge of the concrete totality, as the conceptual reproduction of reality. This concrete totality is in no way immediately given to thought."[69] Lukács wishes to make a distinction between this concrete totality and the idealist delusion of "confusing the intellectual reproduction of reality with the actual structure of reality itself."[70] The intellectual reproduction is not an immediate intuition of a formal totality, but is rather a process of totalization which must constantly be developed through a confrontation with individual phenomena.[71] But it also must be stressed that the role of the social facts of the capitalist world are not merely absorbed as unaltered facts to be fed into an analysis which constructs the whole from the simple aggregate of the parts. Rather, the parts are *starting points* from which the analysis must necessarily begin, but the end goal of the analysis is not a generalization about the average features of the conglomerate of facts, nor a summary of their features as would be the case in a statistical description. The goal of the analysis is a conceptual reproduction of the totality of society, and the nature of this reproduction may be grasped from a number of other statements which Lukács makes both here and in the chapter on reification.

One of the features of this totality is that it will be a *contradictory totality*.

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68. He is critical of this error in the 1967 Preface: *ibid.*, p. 36, HCC, p. xxxiii.
69. *Ibid.*, pp. 179-180, HCC, p. 8. I have made minor modifications.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 180, HCC, p. 9. On this point cf. Kosik's discussion of the difference between the *Vorstellung* and *Begriff* of the object under investigation, and the two resultant types of practice, *op.cit.*, pp. 7-34.
71. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 326-327, HCC, pp. 144-145, where Lukács describes the process by which Hegel constructs a concrete totality by constantly confronting a conceptual system with the new unique events which lead to an increasingly determinate totality.

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Lukács believes that one of the reasons why the atomist and formalist totalities are inadequate for social analyses is that they tend to flatten out the reality which they should be explicating by ignoring data that does not fit into the general patterns of the formal totality, or by constantly redefining the nature of the atomist totality as each new particle enters.[72] In neither of these cases does the possibility emerge of seeing if there might be a tension between different aspects of the totality, a tension which might bring about an alteration in the status of the *now existing totality*. This is claimed to be a possibility if the analyst realizes that the categories with which he is dealing are not merely conventions which may be used as he chooses, but are rather "forms of being, conditions of existence."[73] This guards the theorist against assuming that contradictions encountered in data collecting must be either ignored or camouflaged and closely resembles Simmel's insistence that the forms used in social analysis must have a real claim to be something more than analytic conventions. But Lukács goes even further by demanding that there must be a consistent demonstration that the "forms" which are utilized for analysis must be shown to be connected with actual social processes.[74]

Lukács argues that if the totality is approached in this manner, the tensions encountered in any one part will lead us down the path necessary for insight into the more primary tensions which may be discoverable throughout the society. This knowledge of the whole, according to Lukács, "is only attainable because the relationship between parts and whole has become fundamentally different from what it is in thought based on the categories of reflection. . . the essence of the dialectical method lies in the fact that in every aspect correctly grasped by the dialectic the whole totality is comprehended and that the whole method can be unravelled from every single aspect."[75] Lukács very often argues in this same manner, for instance, in discussing the general structure of consciousness of capitalist society, he claims that an examination of the behavior of a worker *vis-à-vis* the machine he serves could serve as a "structural analogue" to the other forms of contemplative practice which gradually come to dominate the culture.[76] In another instance, Lukács claims that the factory contains "in concentrated form the whole structure of capitalist society."[77] This can be seen as a consequence of the fact that Lukács demands that all categories of analysis be closely tied to the actual forms of social existence which they attempt to reconstruct. He would argue the fact that all of the various components

72. *Ibid.*, pp. 181-182, HCC, pp. 10-11.

73. Lukács in quoting Marx's *Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy*, *ibid.*, p. 175, HCC, p. 4. For an extended discussion of this point, cf. Kosik, pp. 84-95.

74. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193, HCC, pp. 19-20.

75. *Ibid.*, p. 354, trans. pp. 169-170. For a discussion of a similar notion of Marx's method cf. Ollman's discussion of "internal relations" in his *Alienation* (Cambridge, 1971), chapters 2 and 3.

76. *Werke II*, p. 273, HCC, p. 98.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 265, HCC, p. 90.

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of the society do enjoy a certain degree of integration means that they must to an equal extent be capable of reflecting the various tensions which hold together the entire structure. The picture which emerges here may recall Simmel's view of the way in which the whole of society whether analyzed synchronically or diachronically exhibits the same generál features.[78] Lukács clearly wants to preserve some aspects of this orientation, although at the same time he wants to leave open the possibility of new formulations resulting in different social forms which would once again become generalized throughout the society.

He is able to do this by altering the conception of the relationship of the theorizer to the reality described which had existed in bourgeois social theory. The general viewpoint of both the formal and atomist views of the totality is that the truth of a statement about reality was in some way related to a correspondence to the reality described; an accurate mirroring of the formal structures of the society in the case of the formalist, and an accurate generalization about the aggregate of atomic facts in the case of the atomist conception. Lukács rejects a strict correspondence theory of truth, but does not, as Piccone argues, commit himself simply to a coherence theory.[79] Rather, the argument seems to be closer to a claim that the task of analysis is to provide correspondence with a *potential future state* and that this potential future state comes about in part because of the intervention of the theorist. Hence the argument is predicated upon the existence of a class whose status in society is such that it is both necessary for it to have a correct understanding of its position and for it to be capable of bringing about social alterations as a result of its correct self-understanding. In discussing the relationship of this theory to the process which brings about alterations in the reality about which the theory speaks, Lukács writes, "the links between the theory which affirms this and the revolution are not just arbitrary, nor are they particularly tortuous or open to misunderstanding. On the contrary, *the theory is essentially the intellectual experience of the revolutionary process itself.* In it every stage of the process becomes fixed so that it may be generalized, communicated utilised, and developed. Because the theory does nothing but arrest and make conscious each necessary step, it becomes at the same time the necessary premise of the following one."[80] Lukács refuses to give the theory a foundation which is somehow outside of the historical process and thus capable of reflecting on the process without in any way altering either the situation examined or its own foundation. Historical materialism must be applied to *itself*, and hence cannot claim to be a theory which is somehow free of the historical tensions surrounding class conflict.[81] Thus theory itself is not

78. Cf. my discussion of Simmel in *From Tragedy to Dialectics*, pp. 162-164, where his formal sociology is examined.
79. Piccone, "Dialectical Logic Today," *op.cit.*, p. 57.
80. *Werke II*, p. 173, HCC, p. 3. Emphasis mine.
81. *Werke II*, pp. 194-195, HCC, pp. 21-22. The whole of "The Changing Function of

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a reflection on a *Bildung* process, but rather is an integral part of it. Having accepted a viewpoint which demands that all phenomena be viewed in terms of their relations with each other in forming a concrete social whole, it would be inconsistent for Lukács to exempt his theory from being subjected to the same type of analysis. The truth status of the theory of society can only be the degree to which it both enlightens and is enlightened by the growing consciousness of the revolutionary class.

Thus we have come to the end of our ability to discuss the analytical concept of concrete totality and must pass on to a discussion of the process of proletarian *Bildung*. What is important to remember in summary is that the type of analysis which Lukács proposes to carry out through the use of the category of concrete totality requires a certain arrangement of elements in the society which enables the theoretical reflection to work in concert with an emerging class which both helps constitute the predominant relations within the society and yet finds it possible to break with this type of activity and thus form a new social order. The concrete totality is a theoretical reproduction of the totality of a society so structured and thus serves as an agent in the process of transformation. It is not merely the result of a reflection on transhistorical forms nor is it simply a way of uniting scattered elements into a theoretical unity. Rather, it points toward a conceptualization of the broader significance of the day-to-day activities of the members in the class which gains its value as a truth only to the extent to which its articulation leads to a heightening of the class's self-consciousness and to resultant efforts to alter reality. Hence the "abstract" discussion of part-whole mediations which culminates in the notion of "concrete totality" leads inextricably toward an examination of the *social* form of part-whole mediations, i.e., toward a discussion of *Bildung*.

It is now necessary to trace the path which leads Lukács to conclude that the proletariat is indeed the class which fulfills the requirements outlines. It is difficult to determine what type of theorizing is involved here, since for the most part, it is not formulated in a way which would serve the functions of communication and generalization which is associated with theory in the discussion above. Lukács' deduction that indicates that the proletariat is capable of altering reality is not apparently directed at the proletariat itself, and hence the long chapter of reification stands unconnected to the description of theorizing just completed. Perhaps the only purpose which can be assigned to the chapter is that of a theoretical reconstruction for Lukács himself and the others within the Third International who at that point were engaging in the debates that followed the general dissipation of post-World War I revolutionary activity. If one seeks the potential audience of the reification chapter, one can only hope to find it among the "*geistige Elite*"

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Historical Materialism," *ibid.*, pp. 398ff, HCC, pp. 223ff, a lecture delivered in Budapest during the Soviet Republic, illustrates Lukács' point. Once the class conflict has produced a dictatorship of the proletariat, Marxian analytic categories are no longer valid and must be reworked.

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which, according to Ludz, Lukács hoped could oppose the merely "political elite" whose bureaucratic mentality had led, in Lukács' eyes, to the failure of the proletarian uprisings in the immediate post-war period.[82]

Lukács' analysis of the phenomenon of reification in the first section of the chapter essentially takes the form of a repetition of the analyses of "The Old Culture and the New Culture" and perhaps of even *Zur Soziologie des modernen Dramas*. His major theoretical advance comes in the second section which attempts to relate the entire phenomenon of reification to the appearance of unresolvable contradictions in bourgeois philosophy. The tactic of analysis here is remarkably similar to what had been worked out earlier in literary analyses. He turns from an analysis of social relations to the parallel phenomenon of breakdowns in the ideological sector. By examining the efforts of the bourgeoisie to confront the problem of reification in its *philosophical guise,* Lukács hoped to be able to indicate the requirements for overcoming the problem of reification on a *social* level. "Classical philosophy is able to think the deepest and most fundamental problems of the development of bourgeois society through to the very end—on the plane of philosophy. It is able—in thought—to complete the evolution of class. And—in thought—it is able to take all the paradoxes of its position to the point where the necessity of going beyond this historical stage in mankind's development can at least be seen as a problem."[83] Around this specific question Lukács develops an analysis which in an extremely dense manner reformulates all of the oppositions which we have discussed and indicates that they can come to rest only with the realization that the proletariat is the sole conceivable subject capable of recovering the series of alienations which constitute the second nature of forms and conventions which dominate bourgeois life.

Briefly summarized, Lukács' discussion traces the way in which the problem of the irrationality of the thing-in-itself was treated in classical German philosophy. Like Hegel, he feels that the Kantian solution of "infinite tasks" fails to bridge the separation of subject and world. The positing of a delayed solution to the problem of an adequate intersubjective access to reality is viewed as an attempt at pushing a problem for which bourgeois philosophy has no solution off into the infinite future. A qualitative break, the radical disjuncture between the ideal formal community dictated by the apriori forms and the empirical community, is reformulated as a mere quantitative break with the assurance that the ideal of pure reason, while not realizable at the present, will some day come to pass.[84] The problem of aesthetic solutions to the separation of man and world is once again examined, and again the same dangers as before are noted: one either winds

82. Peter Ludz, "Der Begriff der 'demokratische Diktatur'," in Lukács, *Schriften zur Ideologie und Politik, op.cit.*, pp. xlv-xlvi.
83. Lukács, *Werke II,* p. 229, trans. p. 121.
84. *Ibid.*, pp. 344-345, HCC, p. 161, cf. *ibid.*, pp. 287-299, HCC, pp. 111-121.

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up in a state of resignation and the poeticizing of extant reality or one mythologizes the aesthetic mode into something which shapes all of reality in which case the subject is open for Quixotic disillusionment the moment it attempts to act on those beliefs within the reality of the empirical world.[85]

It is only with Hegel that Lukács feels that the problem has been posed in the proper manner, and he endorses Hegel's decision to attempt to resolve the problem of the irrationality of contact with reality by means of a dialectical *Bildung* process which reshapes both subject and object. "...the subject is neither the unchanged observer of the objective dialectic of being and concept (as was true of the Eleatic philosophers and even of Plato), nor the practical manipulator of its purely mental possibilities (as with the Greek sophists): the dialectical process, the ending of a rigid confrontation of rigid forms, is enacted essentially *between the subject and the object.*"[86] Lukács accepts the basic schema that the reintegration of the subject and the world cannot take place through either infinite tasks or intuitive understanding but must proceed as in Hegel, through a series of necessary fragmentations and reintegrations. Lukács has distinguished the specific features of Hegel's conception from Simmel's by his stress on the way in which the subject undergoes alterations as a result of the process. The implications of Hegelian *Bildung* are much more radical than those of Simmel's or Goethe's formulations of the dialectical *Bildung* in that the subject at the end of the process is no longer assumed to be in the form of an individual ego, but is rather a collective "we" subject.[87] Lukács accepts the formal structure of this argument but objects to the nature of the subject that Hegel has chosen, charging that the final result of the operation collapses into a mystification. "Having failed to discover the identical subject-object in history it (Hegel's philosophy) was forced to go beyond history and, there, to establish the empire of reason which has discovered itself."[88] Lukács argues that the withdrawal of the *Bildung* process from history results in an inconsistent devaluation of the very history which was to be the ultimate proof of the Hegelian system. Real history now becomes viewed as having been only contingently tied to the workings of the absolute spirit on its path to the realms of art, religion and philosophy. As had been the case with *Wilhelm Meister,* fantastic devices are required outside of the allegedly totally self-unfolding process if it is to function properly. Lukács sees that the dialectic, at least in the case of the *Phenomenology,* is forced to draw its strength at regular intervals from sources *outside* of the movement of its own contradictions.

This leads Lukács to the claim that while Hegel had correctly viewed the

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85. *Ibid.,* pp. 317-322, HCC, pp. 137-140.
86. *Ibid.,* pp. 323-324, HCC, p. 142.
87. For a clear elucidation of this point, cf. R.C. Solomon, "Hegel's Concept of Geist," *Review of Metaphysics* XXIII (1970), pp. 642ff.
88. *Ibid.,* pp. 329-330, HCC, pp. 147-148.

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necessary type of subject he ultimately is unable to find the subject anywhere within empirical history and is thus led outside of history. This is a significant point: unlike Marx, who seems to have *regarded the entire idea of an identical subject-object* with great suspicion,[89] Lukács rejects only the idea of a *non-historical identical subject-object*. His claim is that there is a subject within history which can be viewed as possessing the necessary attributes of Hegel's purely speculative subject-object. Lukács develops these attributes in terms of finding a place where "genesis and history" coincide. This is possible if two conditions are fulfilled. "On the one hand, all the categories in which human existence is constructed must appear as the determinants of that existence itself (and not merley of the description of that existence). On the other hand, their succession, their coherence and their connections must appear as aspects of the historical process itself, as the structural components of the present. Thus the succession and internal order of the categories constitute neither a purely logical sequence, nor are they organized merely in accordance with the facts of history."[90]

What is accomplished by this statement is an affirmation that the coincidence of synchrony and diachrony which has been observed in Simmel's work, especially his analysis of social forms, and Lukács' aesthetic discussions of the ways in which necessity and chance unite in modern dramas is an important analytic insight. But we must not present the point in an abstract or overly formalized manner and rather must carry Simmel's insistence that the forms bear a resemblance to the reality they describe to its logical end and insist that the forms of analysis always be studied in terms which connect them to the real determinants of historical existence. Hence a purely formal-mathematical model of the social universe, even though it might provide a high degree of descriptive and predictive power and perhaps even of isomorphism with various stages of the social process, *would not* fulfill Lukács' demands unless it were translatable into a description which would indicate how on a day-to-day level this formal regularity perpetuates itself in the world. What Lukács seems to be demanding is an application of Simmel's fairly consistent tendency of always discussing forms in terms of how they are experienced by those who participate in them, rather than how they can be summarized with a high degree of logical formalism.[91] In short, what would

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89. For instance, see Marx's comments on the necessity of man being a natural being with external objects in which he can express his being, *Oekonomische-Philosophische Manuskripte*, in Marx, *Texte zu Methode und Praxis II* (Hamburg, 1968), pp. 117-120, trans. T.B. Bottomore, *Early Writings* (New York, 1964), pp. 206-210.

90. *Werke II*, p. 342, HCC, p. 159.

91. For instance, Simmel's discussion of the dyad makes use of actor-perspective descriptions such as "each of the two *feels* himself confronted not only by the other...," " 'Triviality' connotes a...*consciousness* that a content of life is repeated...," etc. Emphasis mine. These examples are drawn from *Soziologie*, pp. 58-61, trans. pp. 122-126. Sociometry represses this aspect of Simmel's work with its increased concentration on the purely formal aspects of such interactions.

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emerge from this type of analysis is a sort of "*verstehende Soziologie*" of a reified world: an interpretive sociology which does not begin with the apriori assumption that human interaction can be explained solely in terms of rational choices, but must also include descriptions of the processes by which choices are excluded and how these exclusions are experienced by the participants.[92] Lukács immediately notes that this entire approach is predicated on the assumption that the reality which confronts man "exhibits a kind of objectivity which if properly thought out and understood—need never stick fast in an immediacy similar to that of the forms found earlier on." Hence the objectivity accorded to these social forms must not be that of a second nature, but rather that of a "mediating between past and future."[93] Thus the proletariat's self-knowledge must consist of an ability to see that the forms which confront it are on the one hand the real determinants of their day-to-day existence and on the other as the result of a historical process which has led to the composition of the present. Since the proletariat will find that it itself has been a key party in this constitution, it stands in a relationship to reality which gives it the possibility of viewing this reality not as mere fact, but as a set of relations which are historically determined and capable of alteration. In other words, the proletariat has the capability of seeing all of the relations of capitalist society as a stage in a process of its own *Bildung* which must be overcome.

Among other things, this point explains that the failures of theoretical insight on the part of the atomist and formalist totalities must be viewed as symptoms of the same interruption of the *Bidlung* process which only the proletariat (for reasons which will be developed later) can resolve. Lukács' critique of revisionism can now be seen as a critique of a failure to realize that the forms of capitalist society are not capable in themselves of leading to a successful alteration of the class struggle. His critique of bourgeois economy can now be seen as a critique of a failure to recognize that aside from being the forces which determine to a large degree the day-to-day existence of the capitalist society, the forms are also the result of a genesis through history which need not stop at the present state of synchronic equlibrium. And his critique of the syndicalists, as well as his later critique of Lassalle,[94] can be viewed as an argument against either a dismissal of the reality of the formal objectivity of capitalist society or the mystification of the totality into a force which can be altered by the acts of a "great individual." Thus the theoretical failure to achieve an analysis of capitalist society from the standpoint of the

92. Lukács' objections to "*verstehende Soziologie*" rest both on his distrust of the lack of rigor with which the concept of *Einfühlung* is formulated as well as his sense that a greater sensitivity to objective formal limitations is needed. See his "Zum Wesen und zur Methode der Kultur-soziologie," *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, XXXIX (1915), pp. 216ff.

93. *Werke II*, pp. 342-343, HCC, p. 159.

94. See the review of Lassalle's letters, *Werke II*, esp. pp. 262ff, PW, pp. 162-163. This essay is significant in that Lukács makes his position on the concrete totality much clearer by arguing against a concept of the totality which is *solely* indebted to Hegel.

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concrete totality is one and the same with the failure to recognize that the process of *Bildung* within capitalist society can only be successful if it is viewed from the standpoint of the proletariat as a potential identical subject-object.

It is now necessary to examine the claim that the proletariat has the necessary attributes to be the only possible subject which can overcome the reifications of contemporary society. This will entail an analysis of the nature of the objectivity which has been externalized as well as of the proletariat and its role as the subject which carries out the task of recognition and *Aufhebung* of this reality.

On the objective side, Lukács maintains that a good part of the analyses by bourgeois sociologists are useful as descriptions of a contemporary state of affairs. Simmel's *Philosophie des Geldes*, for example, is regarded as "a very interesting and perceptive work in matters of detail" which falls into error only because it remains, like all bourgeois studies of reification, "stuck fast in its self-created immediacy" and hence "even thinkers who have no desire to deny or obscure its existence and who are more or less clear in their own minds about its humanly destructive consequences remain on the surface and make no attempt to advance beyond its objectively most derivative forms, the forms furthest from the real life-process of capitalism..."[95] Lukács' analysis proceeds in the exact opposite direction from that of Simmel. Rather than taking the commodity fetish as the particular exemplar of a general diachronic rule which governs the loss of content from cultural forms, Lukács proposes that the Marxian analysis of the commodity must be utilized as the sole way possible of giving the phenomenon of reification a basis in real, human categories rather than in a mysterious realm which is unrelated to daily human practice. Through the use of a methodology which draws on analytic procedures such as the previously discussed attempt to reconstruct the totality from the relationships which can be found in its single parts, Lukács indicates in the first section of the reification chapter how all of the subject-object relationships in capitalist society take on a resemblance to the basic form of the relationship of the worker to the machine.

We should not assume that Lukács is arguing for anything so simple as a causal link between the experience of the worker with the machine and the rest of the relationships in the society. Rather the claim seems to be something more on the order of an argument that it can be demonstrated that in some way the worker-machine relationship is a particularly clear illustration of the general way in which relations in society are structured. Yet unlike the other cases, it appears that the worker-machine relationship is alterable, since the subject of this interaction—as will be developed below—is capable of being

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95. *Ibid.*, pp. 269-270, HCC, pp. 94-95. In this context see Arato's discussion of how Lukács attempted to employ the works of Simmel, Weber and Marx himself in the same manner that Marx used the works of Smith and Ricardo and attempted a "critique of sociology: i.e., the critique of the totality of capitalist society and the self-critique of Marxism," Arato, "Notes on *History and Class Consciousness*," *Philosophical Forum* III (1972).

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brought to the consciousness that it must alter the type of interaction if it is to survive. With the alteration of this one relationship, Lukács feels that a general restructuring of social relationships would begin to take place throughout the society, but he is not explicit as to how long a transfer this might be. Clearly, in "The Old Culture and the New Culture," he felt that the removal of cultural production from the realm of economic necessity would bring about, in fairly short order, a complete change in culture in general. But by "L'art pour l'art und proletarische Dichtung" (1926) he is arguing that initially there will not be a great alteration in the nature of culture and art once the proletarian revolution has taken place.[96] Aside from Breines' reading which argues that the latter essay is part of a tactical withdrawal on Lukács' part after the condemnation of *History and Class Consciousness* at the World Congress of the International in June 1924,[97] I think it can be argued that Lukacs' position here is far more consistent with his attempts to avoid a crude deduction of cultural phenomena from the economic base than his more messianic position of the earlier essay. It would be inconsistent to claim that the products of bourgeois culture can occasionally overreach the limitations of the economic base and then turn around to claim that the simple substitution of one economic relationship for another will be enough completely to rid all types of proletarian writings from the vestiges of bourgeois reification.

The significance of the objective forms of social life in capitalist society is that they pose a set of problems to be overcome and set the stage for a new type of social formation by defining the way in which the proletariat as a unique subject encounters objective reality. The proletariat is conceived as that group within society which most directly experiences the "analytic" forms of bourgeois social analysis as an oppressive and ever present reality. Lukács argues that if one seeks the most perfect product of rationalize society, one could very well find it in the proletariat since through its own life experience it recapitulates on a concrete level all of the modes of reification and alienation which have been studied only abstractly by the social analysts.[98] It is this inclusion in capitalist society which is of great importance for the proletariat's coming to consciousness of its role in the maintenance of the forms of objectivity and its potential role as the agent which brings about the end to these objective forms. The practical experiences of the proletariat enable the theoretical practice of the critical theorist to have an access to social reality which is, in Lukács' terminology, "mediated." Lukács argues that: "The methodological function of the categories of mediation consists in the fact that with their aid those immanent meanings that necessarily inhere in the

96. Lukács, "L'Art pour l'art und proletarische Dichtung," *Die Tat*, XVIII (1926), pp. 220-223.

97. Breines, "Praxis and its Theorists," *Telos* 11 (1972), pp. 88-89, also Breines, "Introduction to Lukács...," *op.cit.*, pp. 16ff.

98. Cf. Lukács, *Werke II*, pp. 252-253, HCC, pp. 76-77.

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objects of bourgeois society but which are absent from their mental reflection in bourgeois thought, now become objectively effective and therefore enter the consciousness of the proletariat... if the bourgeoisie is held fast in the mire of immediacy from which the proletariat is able to extricate itself, this is neither purely accidental nor a purely theoretical scientific problem. The distance between these two theoretical positions is an expression of the differences between the social existence ofd the two classes."[99] What seems to be argued here is that only the proletariat has an experience of reality which in some ways resembles that of the concrete totality. It is possible for a theoretical reproduction of reality to emerge in the form of the concrete totality simply because the proletariat experiences the objects of capitalist society in a way which leads it to be forced to think in terms of "internal relations" on a pretheoretical level. The immanent connections of the various segments of the bourgeois world outlook are experienced by the proletariat as an integrated whole, simply because the proletariat as a class is a commodity produced by the workings of the total society, yet a commodity which can become conscious of the interconnections which create it.

Thus the proletariat is capable of carrying out a determinate rather than an abstract negation of the estranged reality, since it never is in a position to question that this reality is not a real and threatening presence. Unlike the subject of Simmel's *Bildung* process which can withdraw to live on a presocial level, the proletariat is forced to stay within the reality marked out by the processes of objectification which have led up to the present state of affairs. Unlike the bourgeois social scientist who might occasionally employ an analysis which makes use of economic factors as causal antecedents as an "ideal-type," arguing that life, of course, consists of much more than economic factors, the proletariat to a certain extent experiences reality as economically determined.

So far we have seen that Lukács argued that the social processes of the society produce a subject which can possible overturn the reality since it plays a major role in it. He has also argued that only the proletariat can have the capability of experiencing reality with the necessary mediations to make a consciousness of this fact possible. Lukács does not go much further beyond this argument and does not state that there are any assurances that the proletariat will necessarily take the steps which will bring this alteration about. All that can be said is that there exist certain tensions at this stage of the *Bildung* process, incapable of resolution except in the form of an overthrow of the present order of social organization. The famous concept of "imputed class consciousness" (*zugerechnete Klassenbewusstsein*) does not make any claims about the empirical status of the consciousness of any individual member of the class, but rather expresses the type of consciousness

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99. *Ibid.*, pp. 346-347, HCC, p. 163.

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logically required if the class is to transform itself from object to subject.[100] Logically analyzed, the situation of the proletariat is seen as being both *within society* (as an element of the synchronic arrangement of commodities exchanged) and *outside of society* (as a subject which cannot come to self-realization within the present arrangement of forms). Lukács sees no way of reconciling this duality theoretically, as the revisionists had through an approximation of Kant's infinite series which gradually brings the proletarian society into existence automatically, thus explaining the present dissonance as a temporary status. Nor did he see it possible to leave the duality *unreconciled* as a special case of an eternal state of all individuals in the society. Rather, he seeks to make the task of theorizing contingent on this very dissonance, and argues that the purpose of theory, which now becomes equated with the activities of a party which is no longer simply an aggregate of bureaucrats but rather would seem to require a considerable theoretical competence among its members, is not to *explain* or *describe* the tensions which exist between form and life, subject and object, individual and society. Rather what is required is an explication of these tensions to a subject which at this point in history possesses the possibility of practically overcoming these separations as a part of the very process which brings it to consciousness of them.

### *Conclusions and New Starting Points*

From this discussion I hope it is clear that Lukács' arguments in *History and Class Consciousness* are rooted in an attempt to work out the relationship between three areas which can be analytically distinguished as 1) problems of part-whole mediations in the realm of "pure" theory or dialectical logic, 2) problems of part-whole mediations in *social* theory, and 3) part-whole mediations as experienced on a practical level by members of capitalist societies. The first of these, which I have discussed in terms of notions of totality, can be separated from actual content only at the cost of resisting what seems to be the immanent movement of the philosophical notion of totality itself. In a search for an appropriate analytic practice Lukács is forced to turn away from purely formal analyses and confront the problem of how concrete content can be introduced into the very logic of the totality itself. Hence, the abstract problem of totality leads to the more concrete case of part-whole relations as posed by the problematic of *Bildung*. Yet, as has been seen, the theory of *Bildung* as developed by Hegel, Simmel and Lukács, profits from the interaction with dialectical logic in that only through the

100. *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224, HCC, p. 51. For a discussion of this point see Lucien Goldmann, *The Human Sciences and Philosophy*, trans. Hayden V. White and Robert Anchor (London, 1969), pp. 112ff, Goldmann, "L'importance du concept de conscience possible pour la communication," in his *La Creation culturelle dans la Société Moderne* (Paris, 1971), and Goldmann, "Conscience réele et conscience possible, conscience adequate et fausse conscience," in his *Marxisme et Sciences Humaines* (Paris, 1970).

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introduction of a process of alienation and overcoming can the dichotomy present at the birth of the *Bildung* problematic be confronted. At the same time, Lukács' development of the discussion of proletarian *Bildung* shows that social theory cannot maintain the same contemplative status as that enjoyed by the logical reconstruction of part-whole mediations. Rather, the articulation of characterizations of social phenomena is *already* a type of practice (although often unconscious) within the social realm. Lukács' notion of social theory, as embodied in his theory of proletarian *Bildung*, is thus a mediation sustained by the tension between the analytic concrete totality and the pre-theoretical experience of the social totality in the everyday life experience of the proletariat.

The weaknesses which both Lukács and his critics have noted in the arguments of *History and Class Consciousness* can best be appreciated if we place them within the framework of the book's real achievement: the demonstration of the connection between philosophy and social theory in the notion of *Bildung*. If this is done, they become more a starting point for further reflections which will profit from his labors than a simple consignment of yet another effort at human liberation to the rubbish heap of history. We have seen that Lukács' alterations in the Hegelian concept of *Bildung* are relatively minor. He merely substitutes active practical negation for contemplative negation and changes the *Geist* subject to a class subject.[101] The result of these substitutions is a preservation of the essential form of Hegel's argument, but with the constitutive actors in the process being replaced by Marxist notions such as "classes," culminating in a formulation of the ends of revolution which has a decidedly messianic and metaphysical cast to it. Lukács often speaks as if the destruction of capitalist society is the same type of reversal which takes place with each of the negations of objects in the Hegelian dialectic, i.e., a suspension of the former reality.[102] This point is connected to the problematic notion which has been discussed above concerning the relationship of the proletarian revolution and the general cultural revolution. Lukács at times argues that the alteration of economic and social-class relationships of society brings with it an automatic transformation of all modes of cultural and social intercourse in the society as a whole. We must, in addition, remember that Lukács here defines "proletariat" in terms of the relationship of a negating subject towards an objective totality which is to be negated. That is, the "proletariat" of Lukács' discussion is an "imputed class consciousness" which does not correspond to the empirical consciousness of the members of any given social class in the society. Indeed, the *absence* of this imputed consciousness brings theory into being in the first place, since the theoretically informed party serves as a reflection of the tension which exists between the empirical consciousness of

101. Lukács, *Werke II*, pp. 393-394, 380, HCC, pp. 205, 193.

102. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 363, HCC, p. 178, where he argues that "the act of consciousness overthrows the objective form of the object."

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the proletariat and the "objectively possible" imputed class consciousness. Just as the question of organization is seen as the mediation between the dichotomy of theory and practice, so the party is the mediation between the dichotomy of empirical and imputed class consciousness.[103] Lukács' constant stress on the philosophical significance of the problem of organization and his efforts to indicate that the party must not be a bureaucracy which merely manipulates the masses but rather a theoretically enlightened group which has the capability of interposing itself between the potential and actual levels of class consciousness indicates the degree to which he wishes to avoid a simple model of the party as a device which brings the proletariat into line with an externally posited ideal.[104] A party which simply imposed *its* will on the proletariat would be only a reproduction of the undialectical notion of externally forced *Bildung*, just as the notions of spontaneity which Lukács also attacks represent a regression to the *Bildung* notion of a development of an internal disposition.

These two conceptions, the Hegelian conception of the class subject and the conception of the party as a mediating agent in a process of dialectical *Bildung*, constitute the great central dilemma of Lukács' work, various aspects of which have been touched on by a number of later critics, including Lukács himself. We can phrase the problem as follows: Is the ideal of class consciousness which is opposed to the present consciousness immanently related to the current oppositions of subject and object, or is it a logical abstraction imported from outside of the historical process? If this latter is the case, then the party ceases to be a mediation, which arises out of a tension and at the same time is the agent which resolves the tension, but is rather only a mechanical force, pushing the mass towards an ethical ideal which bears little relationship to the tensions of the society at this historical moment. Lukács' four major criticisms of *History and Class Consciousness* all turn on points related to this problem.

Writing in the 1967 Preface, Lukács notes that he now feels that the notion of the identical subject-object must be rejected as an ideal for the *Bildung* process. Lukács raises the question of whether this notion has the potential for being concretized or whether it must remain an entity which could not be transferred into a historical materialist system. He concludes that it cannot have a real, historical form. "In the *Phenomenology of Mind* Hegel rightly dismisses the notion of a mystical and irrationalistic realization of the identical subject-object, of Schelling's 'intellectual intuition,' calling instead for a philosophical and rational solution to the problem. His healthy sense of reality induces him to leave the matter at this juncture; his very general

103. On the theory-practice mediation, see *ibid.*, p. 475, HCC, p. 299, on the problem of empirical vs. imputed class consciousness, pp. 503-504, HCC, pp. 326-327, and *Werke II*, p. 534, translated by Nicholas Jacobs, *Lenin: A Study on the Unity of his Thought* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 24.

104. *Werke II*, pp. 508-509, 502-503, 514-517, HCC, pp. 331, 325, 336-338.

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system does indeed culminate in the vision of such a realization but he never shows how it might be achieved. Thus the proletariat seen as the identical subject-object of the real history of mankind is no materialist consummation that overcomes the constructions of idealism. It is rather an attempt to out-Hegel Hegel."[105] But it is not enough merely to reject the ultimate solution of the point-by-point transformation of Hegel's system into materialist clothing. Since the identical subject-object is the point toward which all of the other moments of the *Bildung* process lead, there is good reason to believe that they too will have to be altered if they are to be transformed into a materialist dialectic. Lukács acknowledges this, and in a sense his three other objections to the arguments of *History and Class Consciousness* may be viewed as the consequences of the rejection of the identical subject-object. Lukács argues further that his book shared Hegel's basic prejudice of treating all objectifications as alienation, and hence equates the transcendence of alienation with the transcendence of objectification.[106] Arato has suggested that what is required is a gradation of levels between "reification," "objectification," and objective, primordial nature, and notes that one can find hints of a move in this direction in Lukács' text when he argues that reification does not effect all types of human relationships in the same way.[107] This hierarchy would seem to demand an alternative formulation of the notion of *Bildung*, since it now admits elements to the process, such as "primordial nature" which are not to be overcome and "suspended" by the subject, but are accessible only in a "one-sided" rather than dialectical fashion. Hence, Lukács' third criticism is of great importance in this context since it is directed against his failure to develop a notion of "labor" upon which the analyses of the book could take place.[108] The impact of Lukács' reading of the *1844 Manuscripts* is obviously present here, as will be explored more completely below. Finally, Lukács notes a related failure to develop an adequate notion of *praxis* which would help him advance beyond

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105. *Ibid.*, p. 25, HCC, p. xxiii. There is a danger, however, of hypostatizing this error and reading all of HCC as if it were dominated by this construct. For instance, Martin Jay's discussion of differences between Lukács and the Frankfurt School reifies this error into "identity theory," i.e., "the belief that the ultimate oneness of subject and object, essence and appearance, particular and universal underlies the contradictions of the apparent world either inherently or potentially," in "The Frankfurt School's Critique of Marxist Humanism," *Social Research* XXXIX:2 (1972), p. 296, at the cost of ignoring the degree to which Lukács' own exposition of the phenomenon of reification is independent of such a general characterization, a point Arato has demonstrated quite well (cf. note 111 below). In addition, even though Lukács' dialectic fails to explore the full consequences of non-identical nature as is the case in the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, he does not—as Jay seems to claim—denigrate nature by making "man...the measure of all things." Rather, Lukács clearly states that man becomes "the measure of all (societal) things." *Werke II*, p. 371, HCC, p. 185. Cf. also p. 380, HCC, p. 193, for Lukacs' critique of Bloch's tendencies in this direction.

106. *Ibid.*, pp. 525-526, HCC, pp. xiii-xiv.

107. Arato, "Lukács' Theory of Reification," *Telos* 11 (1972), pp. 41-43.

108. Lukács, *Werke II*, pp. 19-20, HCC, pp. xvii-xviii.

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the notion of an idealized imputed class consciousness.[109] As Arato and Piccone have noted, this failure is intimately connected with the lack of a theory of *needs* which would give some indication that the "objectively possible" class consciousness finds its basis within the proletariat although at an unconscious or pre-thematic level.[110] Again, Arato argues that traces of such an argument may be found in the reification chapter, in the fact that the analysis of reification takes the form of a development of the possibilities immanent in the dynamic of reification rather than in the simple positing of an identical subject-object.[111]

Thus Lukács' self-criticism, as well as the arguments of some of his more sympathetic critics, all seem to turn around the question of the need for a reformulation of the arguments of *History and Class Consciousness* in line with a theory of alienation which is rooted in the concept of needs and a dialectic of labor. In our terms, this can be rephrased as the question of how the dialectical *Bildung* process needs to be reconceptualized if we are applying it to the tasks of social analysis rather than to a generation of conceptual objectivities, as has been the case with Hegel. The dialectical notion of the constitution of the subject cannot remain indifferent to the content which it absorbs, and although there is a fundamental harmony between Hegel's use of dialectics and Marx's method of criticizing political economy, it should not be assumed that the formal resemblance of the two procedures will be present at every point of their actual application. Hence, in turning to the *1844 Manuscripts* we are able to see how, in carrying out an analysis of the concept of labor which owes a great deal to Hegel's *Phenomenology* in terms of a logical structure, Marx nevertheless made considerable alterations in the nature of the concrete categories. Subject-object identity is no longer the goal, but rather a notion of a harmonious, total appropriation of objective reality by an objective, embodied subject forms the *telos* of the communist society.[112] This type of goal does not presuppose the elimination of all objective reality with each negation, but rather requires that there be a persisting subject-object tension throughout the *Bildung* process.[113] The subject of this process is not conceived as "Consciousness" but rather as a "natural being," which stands in need of some type of natural background which remains un-negated in the process of development toward a rational social order.

The understanding of the development of this type of individual is closely tied to a correct understanding of the dialectic of labor, a topic to which

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109. *Ibid.*, p. 20, HCC, p. xviii.
110. Piccone, "Dialectic and Materialism in Lukács," *Telos* 11 (1972), pp. 114-115.
111. Arato, p. 54.
112. Marx, *Oekonomisch-Philosophische Manuskripte,* pp. 79-80, trans. pp. 159-160. Cf. Herbert Marcuse, "The Foundation of Historical Materialism" (1932), trans. by Joris De Bres, in Marcuse, *Studies in Critical Philosophy* (Boston, 1973), p. 33.
113. Marx, *op.cit.*, pp. 117-118, trans. p. 207.

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Lukács turned in his later years, but which had already been discussed by Herbert Marcuse in the decade immediately following the publication of *History and Class Consciousness*.[114] With the goal of the *Bildung* process now reconceptualized as the creation of a social situation in which labor can act in a free relationship of appropriation with nature, a number of the problems Lukács indicated in his work can be avoided. Marcuse notes that while reification serves as a disruption of this goal, objectification does not. Hence the idea that a successful completion of the *Bildung* process must result in the overturning of all objective reality is rejected once we turn to a theory of labor which recognizes the existence of objectification as a normal species trait.[115] Indeed, the creation of permanent objects may be conceptualized as a basic species need and labor "has the task—essential to human existence as such—of self-creating, of creating forms endowed with duration and permanence. In fact, the first and final meaning of labor is to 'gain by laboring' the being of human existence itself, in order to 'guarantee' it in duration and permanence. All individual wants are ultimately grounded in this primordial and constant want that existence has, i.e., its full self-creation (*Selbsterwirkung*) in duration and constancy."[116]

Similarly, the problem of the division of labor becomes reposed in a less problematic fashion. In Simmel's work and latently in Lukács' conception, the simple fact that the individual did not achieve an adequate objectivation of his own intentions in products produced under the division of labor was sufficient to cause a rupture in the *Bildung* process. In a *Bildung* process rooted in labor an analysis of the historical forms of labor is necessary to determine whether certain aspects of the division of labor are not unavoidable, and if it is not so much the simple fact of divided labor which is of importance for the disruption of the *Bildung* process, but rather the social significance of the division of labor in maintaining a certain form of domination within a society.[117] Finally, while under the analysis of a *Bildung* conception oriented towards the concept of labor the problem of the *commodity* still plays the major role which it does in Lukács' reconstruction, it cannot be assumed that the sole importance it has is in the impenetrability which for Lukács constitutes the erection of a second nature. Rather, the commodity must now be defined more in terms of its lack of connection to the needs of the workers who produce it and the entire relationship of domination

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114. In additionto Marcuse, "Foundation...," especially pp. 7, 22, see Herbert Marcuse, "On the Philosophical Foundation of the Concept of Labor in Economics" (1933), trans. Douglas Kellner, *Telos* 16 (1973), pp. 9ff; Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (Boston, 1960), pp. 273-312. For a sympathetic critique of Marcuse's early discussion, cf. Kosik, pp. 194ff, especially p. 197.

115. Marcuse, "Foundation...," pp. 17-18.

116. Marcuse, "Concept of Labor...," p. 21.

117. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35. Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*, pp. 177-179. Cf. also André Gorz, "Technical Intelligence and the Capitalist Division of Labor," *Telos* 12 (1972), pp. 27ff.

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and servitude which surrounds its production.[118] This in turn would force a greater concentration on the relationship between the class conceived as an entity standing opposite the commodity and the individuals who constitute the class, who are connected with each other in terms of a similar frustration of needs and constraints on their productive capabilities.[119]

It is obvious that what I have offered here is only the vaguest of suggestions of the ways in which some of the common criticisms of Lukács might be posed within the framework of what I see as his real achievement. It should be obvious also that the modifications I have been indicating are all theoretical alterations within either the notion of concrete totality or *Bildung*. As such, they say nothing of how alterations in class and social struggles since the time of *History and Class Consciousness* might necessitate a reworking of the theory of *Bildung* from another direction. My aim throughout has been to indicate some ways of considering the significance of *History and Class Consciousness* for critical social theory today. The recitation of the obvious shortcomings of the book and the summaries of its arguments which have been offered by those who have attempted either to divorce the book from its immediate tradition or push it back into a now bygone age both serve as ways of shirking the rather considerable theoretical labors which are thrust on us once we cease to read Lukács as a departed founding father of Western Marxism and instead see him as a contemporary whose work remains a challenge to the best of our efforts.

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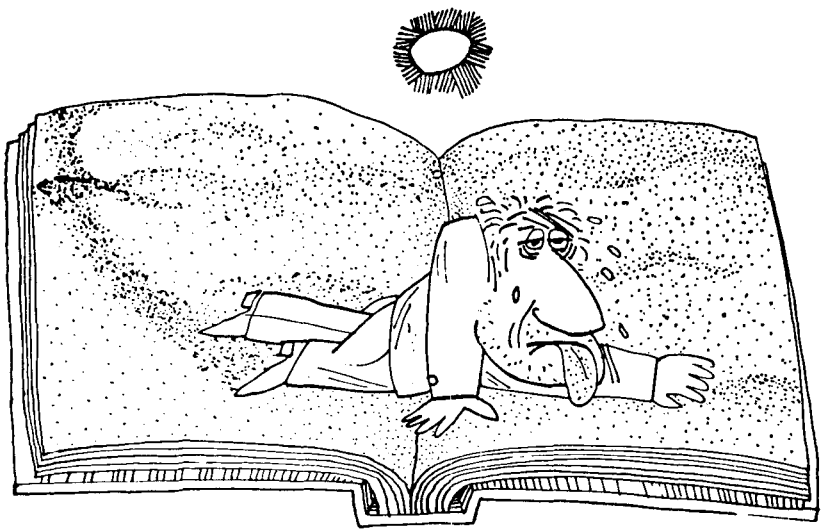
118. Marcuse, "Foundation...," pp. 23, 26. *Reason and Revolution*, pp. 80-87.
119. Arato, "Lukács' Concept of Reification," p. 52.



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# *Moral Development and Ego Identity**

## by Jürgen Habermas

I would like to deal with certain fragments of a thematic which has interested my colleagues and me in connection with an empirical investigation of the conflict and apathy potential of youths.[1] We suspect that among the various models of socialization, among the typical patterns of adolescence, and the corresponding solutions of adolescent crisis and the forms of identity constructed by young people, there is a nexus which can explain deeper lying, politically relevant attitudes. Stating the problem in this way prompts us to consider moral development and ego identity. This theme transcends the above mentioned consideration and leads us to a fundamental question of critical social theory, namely to the question of the normative implications of the fundamental concepts of that theory. The concept of ego identity has, obviously, not only a descriptive sense. It describes a symbolic organization of the ego which, on the one hand, requires a universal modeling because the organization is located in the structure of the inculturation processes and makes possible optimal solutions of culturally invariant, recurring problems of action. On the other hand, the ego organization is in no way regular, as it would be if it were the result of a natural process of maturation; this organization is in fact usually lacking.

When one considers the normative implication of concepts like ego strength, the destruction of the ego-distant parts of the super-ego, the restriction of the functional region of unconscious defense mechanisms, it becomes clear that psychoanalysis also designates definite personality structures as ideal. Insofar as one interprets psychoanalysis as language analysis, the very normative meaning is indicated in the fact that the model for the structure of the ego, the super-ego and the id presupposes the notion of unrestricted, pathologically undistorted communication.[2] In psychoanalytic literature, the normative implications are of course made explicit usually only in terms of the natural therapeutic goal of the analytic treatment.

The social-psychological work of the Institute for Social Research indicates that the fundamental concepts of the psychoanalytic theory in terms of its descriptive activity, hypothesis construction, and measuring instruments are

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* Translated by George Ellard.

1. R. Döbert, G. Nunner-Winkler, "Konflikt- und Rückzugspotentiale in spätkapitalistischen Gesellschaften," in *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 1973, pp. 30L-325; R. Döbert, G. Nunner-Winkler, "Zum Zusammenhang von Adoleszenzdrisenverlauf, Moralbewusstsein und Wertorientierungen, Abschlussbericht der Voruntersuchung" (Manuskript MPIL).

2. J. Habermas, "Der Universalitätsanspruch der Hermeneutik," *Kultur und Kritik*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), pp. 246-301.

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perfectly consistent precisely because of the normative content of that theory. Fromm's early studies on the sado-masochistic character, Horkheimer's on authority and the family, Adorno's investigation of the mechanism of prejudice formation in authoritarian personality types and Marcuse's theoretical work on the structure of instinct and society follow the same conceptual strategy: the psychological and the sociological basic concepts can mesh together because they reciprocally require each other in the image they contain of the autonomous Ego and the emancipated society. This linking of the critical social theory to a concept of the Ego preserves the inheritance of idealist philosophy in psychoanalytic concepts which are no longer idealist; it can still be found in Adorno and Marcuse's assertion that psychoanalysis has now become obsolete: "Society is beyond the stage at which psychoanalytic theory can illuminate the suffusion of society in the mental [*seelische*] structure of the individual and can discover that suffusion through the mechanism of social control *in* the individual. The cornerstone of psychoanalysis is the notion that social control arises out of the fight between instinctual and social needs; out of a fight in the Ego..."[3] It is exactly this intrapsychic confrontation which is supposed to have become obsolete in the totally socialized society, which the family, so to speak, underlies and which directly imprints on the child the collective Ego-ideal. Adorno argues in a similar fashion: "Psychology is not a reserve of the particular protected from the general. The more deeply social antagonisms take root, the more obviously does the thoroughly liberal-individualistic concept of psychology itself lose its meaning. The pre-bourgeois world did not yet know psychology; the totally socialized world knows it no longer. To it corresponds analytic revisionism. The latter is adequate to the transference of power between the society and the individual. The social power scarcely needs any longer the mediating agencies of Ego and Individuality. This fact manifests itself precisely as a growth of the so-called Ego psychology, while in truth the individual, psychological dynamic is substituted for by the partially conscious, partially regressive, adaptation of the individual to the society."[4] But this still melancholic discharge of psychoanalysis appeals to the idea of an unrestrained Ego identical with itself; where else would the form of total socialization allow itself to be recognized if not in the fact that it neither produces nor tolerates upright individuals? At this point I do not want to deal with the thesis of the end of the individual;[5] I believe that Adorno and Marcuse, through an oversuggestive observation and an oversimplified interpretation of certain tendencies, have gone astray by developing a left counterpart to the theory of totalitarian domination popular at the time. I

3. H. Marcuse, "Das Veralten der Psychoanalyse," *Kultur und Gesellschaft*, Vol. 2 (Frankfurt am Main, 1965), p. 96f.

4. T.W. Adorno, "Zum Verhältnis von Soziologie und Psychologie," in *Sociologica* (Frankfurt am Main, 1955), p. 43.

5. J. Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitallismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

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mention this only to draw attention to the fact that critical social theory still holds fast to the concept of the autonomous Ego, on which it supports its gloomy predictions, and that this Ego has lost its basis. Adorno also constantly refused to explain directly the normative content of basic concepts. To specify the structures of the ego which are mutilated in the totalized society would be seen by Adorno as a false positivism.

Adorno had good reasons to reject the demand for a positive conception of social emancipation and Ego-autonomy. He developed these reasons theoretically in his critique of the philosophy of first principles: the attempt of ontological or of anthropological thought to secure itself as a first unmediated ground must fail. Several other reasons arise out of the practical consideration that positive theory, as the example of natural law doctrine shows, carries with it a legitimation potential which, in contradiction to the declared intention of the theory, can be used constantly for the purposes of exploitation and repression. Finally, the normative content of critical basic concepts can be reconstructed non-ontologically, i.e., without reference to a first unmediated ground—they can be reconstructed dialectically only in the form of a logic of development. Adorno, despite his Hegelianism, distrusted the notion of a logic of development because he thought that neither the openness, nor the initiating power of the historical process, neither the genus, nor the individual could be united with the closedness of an evolutionary model.

These are good reasons for advocating caution; however, they do not relieve us of our duty of justifying the concepts employed in the critical sphere. In philosophical contexts, Adorno never flew from this duty. In his *Negative Dialektik*, he says the following about the Kantian idea of the intelligible character: "Subjects are free in the Kantian model insofar as they are conscious of themselves, insofar as they are identical with themselves; but in such an identity they are also once more unfree insofar as they are subordinate to and prepetuate this constraint. They are unfree because in the dynamic which subjugates them, they become independent of the oppressive character of this identity."[6] I interpret this passage as an aporetic unfolding of the determinations of ego identity which makes freedom possible without in turn demanding the price of misery, the violation of the inner nature. I will try to grasp this dialectical concept of ego-identity with the crude tools of the sociological theory of action and without fear of a false positivism. I will try to do this in such a way that the no longer hidden normative content can be admitted into empirical theories. I will also try to make the suggested reconstruction of this content subject to indirect proof.

The developmental problems, which allow themselves to be ordered under the concept of ego-identity, have been treated by three different theoretical

6. T.W. Adorno, *Negative Dialektik* in *Collected Writings*, Vol. 6 (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), p. 294.

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traditions: by analytical ego-psychology (H.S. Sullivan, Erikson), by cognitive developmental psychology (Piaget, Kohlberg) and by certain action theories of symbolic interaction (Mead, Turner, et al.).[7] If we take a step backwards, we will see certain common basic conceptions, which can perhaps be easily grasped:

1) The speech and action capabilities of the adult subject are the result of the integration of growth and learning processes whose interaction we have not yet sufficiently understood. We can distinguish cognitive development from linguistic and psycho-sexual or motivational development. This motivational development seems closely knit with the acquisition of communicative competence, with the ability to take part in interaction (action and discourse).[8]

2) The education process for subjects capable of speech and action proceeds through an irreversible series of discrete and increasingly more complex stages of development. No stage can be skipped, and each higher stage "implies" the preceding in the sense of a rational model of development which can be constructed after the fact. This concept of a logic of development has been worked out especially by Piaget, but in a more or less explicit way it is basic to both of the other theoretical traditions.[9]

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7. For *Ego Psychology* see: H.S. Sullivan, *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry*, (New York, 1940); *The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry*, (New York, 1953); E.H. Erikson, *Kindheit und Gesellschaft*, (Stuttgart, 1956); *Identität und Lebenszyklus*, (Frankfurt Main, 1966); N. Sanford, *Self and Society*, (New York, 1966); D.J. de Levita, *Der Begriff der Identität*, (Frankfurt Main, 1971); G. and R. Blanck, "Toward a Psychoanalytic Developmental Psychology," in *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 1972, pp. 668-710. For *Developmental Psychology*, see: J. Piaget, *Das moralische Urteil beim Kind* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973); *Biology and Knowledge* (Chicago, 1971); H. Furth, *Intelligenz und Erkennen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972); L. Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence," in D. Goslin, ed., *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*, (Chicago, 1969); "From Is to Ought," in Th. Mischel (Ed.), *Cognitive Development and Epistemology*, (New York, 1971), pp. 151-236; J.H. Flavell, *The Development of Role-Taking and Communication Skills in Children*, (New York, 1968); H. Werner and B. Kaplan, *Symbol Formation*, (New York, 1963). For *Interactionism* see: Ch. H. Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order*, (New York 1902); G. H. Mead, *Geist, Identität und Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt am Main, 1970); T. Parsons and R.F. Bales, *Family Sozialization and Interaction Process* (Glencoe, 1964), Ch. II, pp. 35-133; C. Gordon and K.J. Gergen, eds., *Self in Social Interaction*, (New York, 1968); G.E. Swanson, "Mead and Freud, Their Relevance for Social Psychology," in J.G. Manis and B.N. Meltzer (Eds.), *Symbolic Interaction*, (Boston, 1967), pp. 25-45; L. Krappmann, *Soziologische Dimension der Identität*, (Stuttgart, 1971); H. Dubiel, *Identität und Institution*, (Bielefeld, 1973); N.K. Denzin, "The Genesis of Self in Early Childhood," in *The Sociological Quarterly*. 1972, pp. 291-314.

8. J. Habermas, "Notizen zum Begriff der Rollenkompetenz," in: *Kritik und Kultur*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1973), pp. 195-231.

9. "Central to every psychological theory of development is the concept of the stage of development. This has been worked out in its strongest and most precise form in the cognitive tradition (Piaget, Kohlberg). These authors speak of stages of cognitive development only under the following conditions (J. H. Flavell, "An Analysis of Cognitive Developmental Sequences" in *Gen. Psych.* Monographs, 86, pp. 279-350); The cognitive schemata of individual stages are *qualitatively* distinguished from each other and the individual elements of a phase-specific style of thought are related to each other in such a way that they form a structured whole. Specific modes of behavior are not simply specific *vis-a-vis* objects, externally stimulated responses; they are interpretable as derivatives of a definite form of structuring of the environment. The phase

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3) The education process takes place not only in a discontinuous fashion, but also usually in the form of crises. The solution of developmental problems associated with a specific stage presupposes a new phase of structuring and, partly, a new phase of regression. The experience of the productive solution of a crisis, i.e., the overcoming of the dangers of pathological paths of development, is the condition for overcoming later crises.[10] The concept of a maturation crisis have been developed especially in psychoanalysis, but it also has a meaning in connection with the adolescence phase for both of the other theoretical traditions.[11]

4) The developmental direction of the education process is characterized by increasing autonomy. By this I mean the independence which the Ego acquires through successful problem solving and through a growing problem solving capacity in connection with a) the reality of both external nature and a society which in certain strategic respects is controllable, b) the non-reified symbolic structure of a partially assimilated culture and society, and c) the inner nature of the body, of culturally interpreted needs, and of impulses which are not amenable to the communicative structure.

5) The identity of the Ego signifies the competence of a subject capable of speech and action to satisfy definite demands of consistency. A provisional formulation of Erikson runs as follows: "The feeling of ego identity is the accumulated confidence that the unity and continuity, which one has in the eyes of another, corresponds to a capability to maintain an inner unity and continuity."[12] Ego identity is naturally dependent on definite cognitive presuppositions, but it is not a determination of the cognitive Ego; it consists rather in a communication competence which arises through social interaction. Identity is produced by *socialization*, i.e., by that through which the developing person integrates himself for the first time in a definite social system through the acquisition of symbolic publics. The identity is secured and unfolded later on through individualization, i.e., through a growing independence of social systems.

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specific schemata are ordered in an *invariant* and at the same time *hierarchically structured sequence*. This means that no later phase can be reached without passing through all of the prior phases; furthemore, that in later stages of development the elements of earlier phases are superceded (*aufgehoben*) and are integrated into higher planes; and that a developmental direction can be found for the whole sequence (increasing independence of stimuli and greater objectivity). Above all else, these stages of development are interesting psychologically because from the facts that individuals constantly prefer solutions to problems which correspond to the highest plane they can reach and that schemata which spring from a stage which has been surpassed are generally avoided, we can conclude that a logic of development does not represent a merely externally psychologically and also motivationally significant reality." R. Döbert, G. Nunner-Winkler, *Konflikt- und Rückzugspotentiale in spätkapitalistischen Gesellschaften*, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

10. J. Cumming and E. Cumming, *Ego and Milieu*, (New York, 1967).

11. E. Turiel, "Conflict and Transition in Adolescent Moral Development," in: *Child Development* 1974, pp. 14-29.

12. Erikson, *Lebenszyklus*, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

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6) An important mechanism of learning is the transformation of external structures into internal ones. Piaget speaks of interiorization, if schemata of action, rules for manipulative domination of objects, are transferred inward and are transformed into schemata of apprehension and of thought. Psychoanalysis and interactionism assert a similar transformation of interaction models into intrapsychic reference patterns.[13] With this mechanism of internalization is connected the further principle, active repetition of which leads to an independence of that which one at first passively experiences or undergoes—whether it be in respect to external objects, reference persons, or one's own impulses.

In spite of these common basic conceptions, none of these three starting points has led to a theory of development with explanatory power, a theory which would allow an exact and empirical, content-laden determination of the ever more frequently used concepts of ego identity. Nonetheless, Jane Loevinger, in connection with analytical ego-psychology, has attempted to construct a theory which would comprehend ego development independent, on the one hand, of cognitive development and, on the other, of psychosexual development.[14] According to this conception, ego development and psychosexual development both determine motivational development. I do not want to discuss this suggestion in detail, but I will indicate three difficulties.

1) The claim to grasp with an analytic sharpness such a thing as ego-development through the three dimensions of behavior control and super-ego formation, interaction style, and developmental problems specific to stages does not seem to me to have been plausibly solved. The developmental problems which appear in the third division obviously do not lie in one dimension but touch upon cognitive, motivational and communicational tasks. Moreover, the formation of the super-ego, which is ascribed to the first division, can scarcely be analyzed independently of psychosexual development.

2) The claim that the pretended stages of development follow an inner logic does not even allow an intuitive solution. These divisions do not characterize a structured whole; nor does a hierarchy of stages of development built on one another with increasing complexity allow for these divisions.

3) Finally, the relationship of the observed logic of ego development to the empirical conditions under which this logic is transmitted into concrete life histories is not at all considered. Are there alternative paths of development which lead to the same goal? When do deviations occur from the rational, *post facto* model of development? How large are the tolerance boundaries for personality systems and social structures for such deviations? How do the stage

13. J. Loevinger, *Origins of Conscience*, M.S. (Washington Univesity, St. Louis, 1974).

14. J. Loevinger, "The Meaning and Measurement of Ego Development," in *American Psychologist*, 1966, pp. 195-206; Loevinger and R. Wessler, *Measuring Ego Development*, (San Francisco, 1970); Loevinger and Wessler, "Recent Research on Ego Development," M.S. (Washington University, St. Louis, 1973).

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of development and the institutional base of a society interfere with an ontogenetic development model? I would like to deal with these three difficulties in turn.

I will isolate a central and well examined aspect of ego development, namely moral consciousness, but I will here consider only the cognitive side, the capacity for moral judgment. After this I would also like to show that Kohlberg's stages of moral consciousness satisfy the formal conditions of a logic of development, since I will reformulate these stages into the framework of a general theory of action. I also want to remove the restrictions on the cognitive side of communicative activity and show that ego-identity demands not only the cognitive mastery of general communication levels, but also the ability to bring one's own needs to the fore in this communication structure. So long as the Ego restricts itself from its inner nature and denies the dependence of its needs, which are still waiting for an adequate interpretation, that freedom, which is still so thoroughly grounded on principles, remains in truth unfree with respect to existing systems of norms.

Kohlberg defines six stages of a rational, subsequently construable development of moral consciousness. Moral consciousness expresses itself chiefly in judgments on morally relevant conflicts of action. Conflicts of action are 'morally relevant' if they exclude a 'reasonable compromise,' i.e., if they allow only solutions which injure the interests of at least the parties concerned or those perplexed by the situation; permit a transitive ordering of the interests involved under a standard of a good and just life accepted as leading to a possible consensus; and in the case of an offense involve certain sanctions (punishment, shame or guilt). (Cf. Kohlberg's definitions and explanations of the stages of moral consciousness.)

This empirically supported classification of expressions of moral judgment is said to satisfy the theoretical claim to represent *stages* of moral consciousness. If we want to adopt the burden of proof which has not been redeemed by Kohlberg, we must show that the descriptive sequence of moral types represents a nexus of developmental logic (in the precise sense of Flavell). We want to reach this goal by linking moral consciousness with general qualifications of role action. For this, the following three steps will be useful: I will first of all introduce a structure of possible communicative action in the succession in which the child grows into this sector of the symbolic universe. I will then coordinate this basic structure with the cognitive ability (or competence) which the child must acquire to be active in the current level of his social environment, i.e., in order to be able to take part in incomplete or complete interaction or also, finally, in communications which require a transition from communicative action to discourse. The series of these general qualifications should be conceptualizable as a logic of development. Finally, the stages of moral development ought to be derivable from this analysis.

I will begin with the symbolic components of communicative action which

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must be presupposed for the perception of moral conflicts. To these belong concrete behavior expectations and corresponding intentional actions; in other words, generalized behavior expectations which are reciprocally joined with one another, social roles and norms which govern actions, and principles which could serve for the justification or, better said, for the production of norms; the situational elements, which are bound together with actions (e.g., as consequences of action) or with norms (e.g., as conditions of their application or as secondary effects); in addition actors, who communicate with each other about something and, finally, orientations, insofar as they are effective as motives for action. I will adopt the theoretical framework for action introduced by Mead and developed by Parsons without, thereby, accepting the conventional role theory.[15]

For the preparatory school child, who still finds himself cognitively at the sate of pre-operative thought, the sector of his symbolic universe relevant to action consists primarily in particular concrete behavior expectations and actions as well as in the consequences of actions which can be understood as gratifications or as sanctions. As soon as the child has learned to play social roles, i.e., to participate as a competent member in interaction, his symbolic universe consists no longer only in actions which express particular intentions (e.g., wishes or the fulfillment of wishes). Actions can now be understood as the fulfillment of temporally generalized behavior expectations (or as violations of these). When the youth has finally learned to question the validity of social roles and norms for actions, he once more broadens the sector of the symbolic universe: principles are now introduced in terms of which conflicting norms can be judged. This analysis of hypothetical validity claims demands the temporary suspension of the constraints of action or, to put it in another way, the passage into a realm of discourse in which practical questions are clarified through discussion.

In the succession of these three levels, the actors and their needs are also assimilated step by step into the symbolic universe. The orientations which guide action on the first plane are assimilated into the symbolic universe only insofar as they are generalized in the dimension Desire-Aversion [*Lust-Unlust*]. Only on the second plane is the satisfaction of needs mediated through the symbolic approval of the primary reference persons or through social recognition in expanded groups. Only then is this satisfaction freed from the egocentric connection with one's own gratification balance.

Motives for action take on in this manner the form of culturally interpreted needs. The satisfaction of these needs is dependent on the adherence to socially recognized expectations. On the third plane, the natural process of need interpretation, which until now depended on an unplanned cultural

15. T. Parsons, *The Social System*, (London, 1951); "Social Interaction," in: IESS, Vol. 7, pp. 429-441. J. Habermas, "Stichworte zur Theorie der Sozialisation," in *Kultur und Kritik*, *op. cit.* pp. 118-194; H. Joas, *Die gegenwärtige Lage der soziologischen Rollentheorie*, (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

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tradition and the conduct of institutional systems, can itself be elevated to an object of discursive formation of the will. In such a way, critique and the justification of need interpretations can achieve an action orienting force beyond the already culturally interpreted needs.

We have so far described the communication levels through which the child grows into the structure of possible communicative action in such a way that corresponding modes result for perception and self-perception of behavior and of subjects who subtend interaction. When the child leaves his autistic phase and becomes receptive to the perspective of punishment and obedience for moral standards, it has already learned to distinguish himself and his body from his surroundings, even if he cannot yet distinguish in these surroundings physical and social objects. Thus, the child has achieved, as it were, a 'natural' identity which it owes to the ability of his body to overcome time, to the ability of an organism to maintain boundaries. (Plants and animals are, of course, a system in an environment, which not only as stimulated bodies possess an identity 'for us,' the identifying observers, but also an identity for themselves.)[16] Actors on the first level are not yet drawn into the symbolic world in this way. Natural agents appear to whom intelligible intentions can be *attributed*, but as of yet, there are no subjects about whom one could *anticipate* actions in terms of generalized behavior expectation. On the second level, identity can be separated for the first time from the physical appearance of the actor. To the extent that the child incorporates the symbolic universals of fewer fundamental roles of his familial environment and later incorporates the action norms of more extended groups, his natural identity is overformed by a symbolically supported role identity. Corporeal characteristics, such as sex, physical endowments, age, etc., are subsumed in symbolic definitions. On this plane, actors appear as role-dependent reference persons and later also as anonymous bearers of roles. On the third level, the bearers of roles transform themselves for the first time into persons, who can maintain their identity independently of concrete roles and special systems of norms. We imply, of course, that the youth has realized the important distinction between norms, and basic principles [*Grundsätzen*] from which we can produce norms, and that he has, thus, also achieved the capacity to judge according to principles. He sees that traditional, customary forms of life can prove themselves to be mere conventions, to be unreasonable. Therefore, he must maintain his ego behind all special roles and norms, and he must stabilize himself alone through the abstract capability to represent himself in any situation as someone worthy of belief, as someone, who, in the face of incompatible role expectations or a series of contradictory life experiences, can satisfy the demand for consistency. Identity through roles is superseded by Ego identity; through the objective continuity of their lives, the actors meet as individuals.

16. J. Habermas, "Können komplexe Gesellschaften eine vernünftige Identität ausbilden?", in Habermas and Henrich, *Zwei Reden* (Frankfurt am Main, 1974), pp. 28ff.

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Up to this point we have focused our attention on the components of the symbolic universe which in a step-by-step fashion secure reality for the developing youth. If we turn our gaze in a psychological fashion to the abilities which the active subject must achieve in order to move about in the communication structure, we run into the general qualifications of role action which comprose the action relevant component of communicative competence. The increasing mastery of the basic structures of possible communication and the correlative increase in context independence of the active subject correspond to a graduated role competency which can be analytically divided into three dimensions. In each of these dimensions, the new conditions should be structured under formal standards like a hierarchy, in such a way that the contention that the three levels of communication cohere in terms of a logic of development could be proven.

The first dimension comprises the perception of the cognitive components of role qualifications: the actor must be able to understand and comply with individual behavior expectations of an Other (Level I); he must be able to understand and comply with reflexive behavior expectations (roles, norms) or else deviate from them (Level II); finally, he must be able to understand and to apply reflexive norms (Level III). The three levels are differentiated by degrees of reflexivity: the simple behavior expectations of the first level become reflexive on the next: expectations become reciprocally expectable; and the reflexive behavior expectations of the second level again become reflexive on the third: it becomes possible to standardize norms.

The second dimension is based on the perception of the motivational component of general role qualifications: here the causality of nature is not distinguished from the causality of freedom; imperatives are understood in nature and society as an expression of concrete wishes (Level I); later, the actor must be able to distinguish obligatory from merely desired action (duty and inclination), i.e., the validity of a norm from the mere facticity of an expression of the will (Level II); and finally, he must distinguish between heteronomy and autonomy, i.e., he must be able to see the difference between traditional and imposed norms and norms capable of justification by principles. With each level of development, the action guiding orientation becomes more abstract: concrete needs, duty, the autonomous will.

The third dimension comprises the perception of a component of general role qualification which, if I understand correctly, presupposes both of the others and has both cognitive and motivational sides. At first, context dependent, i.e., concrete, actions and actors are perceived. Only particulars exist (level I). On the next level, symbolic structures must be differentiated according to general and particular; particular actions must be differentiated with respect to norms and particular actors, with respect to role-bearers. On the third level, it must be possible to thematize particular norms in terms of a capacity to generalize, so that the distinction between particular and general norms becomes possible. Actors can no longer be understood as a

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combination of role attributes; they are now individualized particulars who through the application of principles organize an unmistakable biography. In other words, at this stage individuality and ego must be differentiated. The elements of both of the higher levels result from repeated generalization.

A glance at the so often illustrated divisions shows that the stages of universal role qualifications represent a continuity characterized by a logic of development. There exists between higher and lower levels an inclusion relationship of differentiation (Hegel's concept of *Aufhebung*). The same would hold for the stages of moral consciousness, if these can be inferred from the levels of role competence.

In order to derive the stages of moral consciousness, I assume that this consciousness means nothing other than the consequent application of role competencies for a *conscious* working out of morally relevant conflicts. The solution of a moral conflict requires, as you remember, a standard capable of consensus through which a transitive ordering of the conflicting interests can be produced.

Role competent, active subjects will come to accord only if that standard springs out of the structure of possible communication. Such a standard is the reciprocity between active subjects. In every conceivable communication, along with the interpersonal relationship between the participants, a relationship of at least incomplete reciprocity is produced. Two persons stand in an incompletely reciprocal relation insofar as the one may always do or expect $x$, while the other may do or expect a $y$ (teacher-pupil; parent-child). Their relationship is completely reciprocal if both may do or expect the same thing in comparable situations ($x = y$) (cf. norms of civil law). In a famous essay, Gouldner speaks of the reciprocity norm which is the basis of all interactions;[17] this expression is not entirely apt, because reciprocity is not a norm, but is rather something which belongs to the general structure of possible communication, so that the reciprocity standard belongs *eo ipso* to the intuitive knowledge of a subject capable of language and action. If this is so, the stages of moral consciousness can be derived in the same way in which we apply the demands of reciprocity to the components of the communication structure which components, as we have seen, become thematic on the different levels of role competency.

On level I, only concrete actions and consequences of actions (which are understood as gratifications or sanctions) become morally relevant. If in this respect an incomplete reciprocity is found, we obtain Kohlberg's Stage 1 (punishment obedience-orientation); with complete reciprocity, Stage 2 (instrumental hedonism). On level II, the sector relevant to action increases in size: if we require for concrete behavior expectations bound to reference persons an incomplete reciprocity, we obtain Kohlberg's Stage 3 (good boy

17. A.W. Gouldner, "The Norm of Reciprocity," in *American Sociological Review*, 1960, pp. 161-178; cf. Gouldner, *Enter Plato* (New York, 1965).

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orientation); the same demand for systems of norms results in Kohlberg's Stage 4 (law and order orientation). On level III, principles reach the level of moral themes, and complete reciprocity is necessary even from purely logical considerations. The stages of moral consciousness differentiate here according to the degree of symbolic structuring of motives for action. If the needs relevant to action are allowed to remain outside the symbolic universe, then the admissible universal norms for action have the character of advantage maximizing rules and abstract norms of right which allow for the pursuit of private interests under the condition that the egoistic freedom of one person is compatible with the egoistic freedom of another. In such a way, the egocentrism of the second stage is elevated to the level of principles. This corresponds to Kohlberg's Stage 5 (contractual-legalistic orientation). When needs are understood as culturally interpreted, but are only attributed to the single individual as natural property, the admissible, universal norms of action have the character of general and moral norms through which each individual ought to test in a private manner the generalization capacity of the particular norm. The revision of the interpretation of need is still excluded. This corresponds to Kohlberg's Stage 6 (conscience orientation). The interpretation of needs, themselves, that which each individual believes ought to be understood and represented as his "true" interests, can first become an object of practical discourse only at the stage of a universal speech-ethic. Kohlberg does not differentiate this stage from Stage 6: the principle of norm justification is no longer the individually applicable basis of the ability to generalize; it is rather the collectively observed procedure for the discursive solution of normative validity claims. The systematic derivation of the stages of moral consciousness from role competence shows that Kohlberg's stages are incomplete.

Let me pause for a moment. In ego identity is found the paradoxical relation that the ego as person is like to all other persons, but is absolutely different as an individual from all other individuals. Ego-identity proves itself in the ability of the adult to construct new identities in conflict situations and to bring these into harmony with the superseded old identities. The ego does this in order to organize itself and its interaction under the perspective of general principles and modes of behavior in an individual life history. To be sure, I have so far developed this concept of ego identity only in terms of its cognitive, and not in terms of its motivational, side. I have chosen the perspective through which we can observe the ego of the child develop in a step-like fashion into the general structure of possible communicative action and, through this, secure stability and autonomy. This perspective, however, screens out the psychodynamic of the learning process. It ignores the instinctual structure in which the development of the ego is interwoven. In the dynamic of the formation of the super-ego, the instrumental role, which libidinal energies play in the form of a narcissistic control of the self through the formation of the ego-ideal, can be ascertained in the same way we ascer-

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tain the function which aggressive energies directed against the self assume in the creation of the court of conscience.[18] However, that which shows itself above all else in the great maturation crises of the oedipal phase and adolescence, in which sex roles are learned and the motivational power of the cultural tradition is tested, is that the ego can only penetrate and permeate the communication structure if its needs can find their place and be adequately interpreted in this symbolic structure. In this respect, ego development can be seen as an extraordinarily dangerous process. We do not have to prove this by referring to pathological development. An inconspicuous sign lying in the regions of normalcy is the frequent discrepancy between moral judgment and moral action.

The correlation between levels of role competency and stages of moral consciousness signifies that if someone has at his disposal a certain role competency and if he has constructed a motivation structure, or better, an identity which puts him in the position to work out morally relevant conflicts on the level of his general role competency, then he has at his disposal the corresponding stage of moral judgment and action. In many cases, however, the general qualifications of role-action which suffice for mastering normal situations cannot be stabilized under the stress of open conflict; the party concerned will then revert in his moral action or even in both his moral activity and judgments to the threshold of his usual role competency, so that a shift occurs between the stage of his normal role activity and that stage on which he is working out a moral conflict. Moral consciousness is an indicator for the degree of stability of role competence, since it places the active subject under the imperative of conscious conflict resolution.

The connection between conscious conflict resolution and morality becomes clear in extreme situations which do not admit an unequivocal solution, situations which make a transgression of a rule (a lapse) unavoidable; an action, which in such a situation also stands under the conditions of morality, we call 'tragic.' In the concept of the tragic is found the intentional acceptance of punishment (e.g., guilt) and, therefore, the fulfillment of the moral postulate of consciousness still faced with a morally insoluble dilemma. But here some light falls on the meaning of moral actions in general; we qualify as morally good those persons who maintain the role competency, which masters conflict free normal situations, even under stress, i.e., in morally relevant conflicts (instead of unconsciously avoiding them).

The ego has already devised definite plans (defense mechanisms) for situations in which it would like to avoid conscious conflict resolution. This ingenious conflict avoidance strategy is similar to the reaction of flight from danger; this is screened from consciousness in that the ego hides it from

18. M. Mitscherlich, "Probleme der Idealisierung," in *Psyche* 1973, pp. 1106-1127. J. Sandler, "Zum Begriff des Uber Ichs," in *Psyche* 1964, pp. 721-743, pp. 812-828. R.A. Spitz, *Eine genetische Feldtheorie der Ich-Bildung*, (Frankfurt Main, 1972); E. Jacobson, *Das Selbst und die Welt der Objekte*, (Frankfurt Main, 1973).

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consciousness. Not only are external reality or instinctual impulses sources of danger; the sanctions of the super-ego also represent a threat. This threat always appears when in moral conflicts we must act other than the way we act with a clear judgment. With the help of defense mechanisms, we hide the discrepancy between the capacity to judge and our readiness to act. The theory of defense mechanisms, moreover, has not been decidedly improved [19] since the first provisional attempt at systematization by Anna Freud. [20] Several new investigations allow us to suspect that the classification in terms of a logic of development of the fears induced through reaction of the super-ego (fear of punishment, shame, or guilt) makes a theoretical deduction of defense mechanisms possible. [21] Definite identity formations promote such fears because they make possible moral insights which are, so to speak, more progressive than those motives for action which are mobilizable under these restrictions.

This dual status of ego identity reflects not only the cognitive-motivational duality of ego development, but also the interdependence of society and nature which permeates the formation of identity. The model of an unconstrained ego identity is more exact and richer than an autonomy model that is developed exclusively out of a moral perspective. This can be seen in our completed hierarchy of the stages of moral consciousness. One can understand the meaning of the transition from the sixth to the seventh stage, i.e., from a formalistic ethic of duty to a universal speech ethic in that interpretations of needs are no longer assumed as given, but are embedded in the discursive formation of the will. In this way, inner nature is shifted into a utopian perspective. At this stage, the inner nature need no longer be scrutinized within a natural interpretation frame fixed by cultural traditionl by an egotistically applied principle of universalization. Nor need it then be split into legitimate and illegitimate components, duties and inclinations. The inner nature is made communicatively clear and transparent to the extent that needs can be linguistically preserved through aesthetic forms of expression or released from their paleosymbolic, prelinguistic state. That means, however, that the inner nature in its provisional, prior cultural preformation is not subjugated to the claims of ego autonomy, but maintains itself through a free access to interpretation possibilities of the cultural tradition. In the medium of value and norm building communication, in which aesthetic experiences enter, traditional, cultural contents would not be any longer simply patterns according to which needs are stamped; in this medium needs could seek and find their appropriate interpretations. This

19. G.E. Swanson, "Determinants of the Individual's Defenses against Inner Conflict," in J.C. Gleidewell, ed., *Parental Attitudes and Child Behavior* (Springfield, 1961), pp. 5ff; P. Madison, *Freud's Concept of Repression and Defense* (London, 1961).

20. A. Freud, *Das Ich und die Abwehrmechanismen* (München, 1964).

21. G.C. Gleser and D. Ihilevich, "An objective instrument for Measuring Defense-Mechanisms," in *Consulting and Clinical Psychologist* (1969), pp. 51-60.

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communications flow requires, of course, sensitivity, the establishment of constraints, dependence—in short, a cognitive style characterized by a field dependence which the ego overcomes on the way to autonomy and replaces with a field independent sytle of perception and thinking. An autonomy, which robs the ego of a communicative access to its own inner nature, also signals an unfreedom. Ego-identity means a freedom which limits itself through the intention, if not to unite dignity with happiness, at least to make them compatible.

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# *Political Economy and Critical Theory**

## by Giacomo Marramao

"That today men are unable to rationally regulate economic relations (i.e., their mutual relations to the production and reproduction of social life) in a way corresponding to the degree of understanding in other fields, cannot simply be explained as theoretical weakness. Rather, the existence of economics as a self-enclosed special discipline which allows itself to be determined by the general social problematic less and less is the expression of the more profound state of affairs whereby present-day power relations are opposed to regulation for the benefit of the majority of men. It is a problem of praxis whose solution will shape the content of the history lying immediately before us. The fortunes of the coming generations depend on its outcome."

Written by Max Horkheimer in 1934, these words appear in the introductory remarks to Kurt Mandelbaum's and Gerhard Mayer's study, "Zur Theorie der Planwirtschaft" ("On the Theory of the Planned Economy").[1] The intervention of the most important exponent of "Critical Theory" in what appears to be an exclusively economic debate was itself already symptomatic of the complexity of the theoretical and political questions at the roots of the problematic of economic planning in the 1930s. Stimulated by the Soviet experience and by the monopolistic-totalitarian tendencies in the German economy, the discussion had already begun with the first volume of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, in Friedrich Pollock's essay on "Die gegenwärtige Lage des Kapitalismus und die Aussichten einer planwirtschaftlichen Neuordnung" ("The Present Situation of Capitalism and the Outlook for an Economically Planned New Order").[2]

All the participants in the discussion presented different "ideal types"[3] of the planned economy: both those which were hypothetically assumed as well as realizable. In so doing they consciously abstracted from the empirical

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* Originally published as "Introduzione" to Friedrick Pollock, *Teoria e Prasso dell'Economia di Piano: Antologia di Scritti: 1928-1941* (Bari, 1973) and as "Zum Verhältnis von Politischer Oekonomic und Kritischer Theorie," in *Aesthetik und Kommunikation*, Heft 11, Apr. 1973, pp. 79-93. English translation by Ray Morrow.

1. *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. III (1934), p. 228.

2. *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. I (1932), pp. 8-27. Among the most important contributions to the discussion of the "planned Economy" cf. Gerhard Meyer's many reviews, especially "*Neue englishe Literatur zur Planwirtschaft*," in *Zeitschrift für Socialforschung*, vol. II (1933), pp. 257ff.

3. Weber's expression is not employed by chance. Pollock explicitly refers to it in the essay "State Capitalism" in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. iX (1941), p. 200n.

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forms of historically determined economic processes. Despite the reference to the necessity of praxis (emphasized in the above quote from Horkheimer), this tendency to describe different "models" of economic planning in historical terms meant a clear retreat of theoretical analysis as a consequence of the failure of the German revolution. We are far removed from the controversy over accumulation and collapse provoked by Rosa Luxemburg's book and by the heated exchanges on the future of capitalism which presupposed a still open dialectic and different ways of conceiving and practicing revolutionary tactics. The "freezing" of the historical movement caused by Nazi totalitarianism, manifested itself in the heightened interest in economic planning efforts undertaken in the Soviet Union.[4]

The studies of Meyer, Mandelbaum and above all Pollock, contain important new elements which—considering the influence they have had on the most important theorists of the *Zeitschrift* (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse)—must be clearly brought out. The basic novelty stems from the choice of the central elements of economic analysis; they are the following: (1) a *dynamic* aspect: the tendency of capitalism to overcome the crisis by means of an economically planned new order; (2) a *static* aspect: the "model" of the planned economy; (3) *state capitalism*, understood as an abstract form of economic organization, i.e., as an "ideal type."

At the basis of this analysis lies the presupposition that capitalism can definitively abandon the competitive phase and develop toward a planned economy. This presupposition marks the fundamental difference between Pollock's theory and that of the most important economist of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Henryk Grossmann.[5] In order to understand this difference, a short excursus is necessary to show how Grossmann had participated in the discussion of the collapse of the capitalist system.[6]

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4. In the above quoted passage Horkheimer himself referred to the necessity to correctly pose the *theoretical* problem of the planned economy by linking up "with the great experience which mankind is presently undergoing with planned economic efforts" (*op.cit.*, p. 228). Evidently, Horkheimer was thinking of Pollock's book *Die planwirtschaftlichen Versuche in der Sowjetunion* (Leipzig, 1929; reprinted Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1971). Of course within the limits of this essay we cannot go into the important contributions on the theory of transition in the *Zeitschrift* and the Asiatic mode of production. Particularly relevant are the following: Franz Borkenau, "Zur Soziologie des mechanistischen Weltbildes," vol. I (1932), pp. 311-355 (cf. Grossmann's critique of it in the essay "Die gesellschaftlichen Grundlagen der mechanistischen philosophie und die Manufaktur," vol. iV (1935), pp. 161-230), whose theme is taken up again in the book *Der Uebergang vom feudalen zum bürgerlichen Weltbild* (Paris, 1934; reprinted Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971); and K.A. Wittfogel, "The Foundations and Stages of Chinese Economic History," vol. IV (1935), pp. 26-58; "Die Theorie der orientalischen Gesellschaft," vol. VII (1938), pp. 90-120; "The Society of Prehistoric China," vol. VIII (1939), pp. 138-183; and above all, his *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* (Leipzig, 1931).

5. Biographical and bibliographical information on Grossmann can be found in M. Trottmann, *Zur Interpretation und Kritik der Zusammenbruchstheorie von Henryk Grossmann* (Zurich, 1956). Cf. also Russell Jacoby, "Politics of the Crisis Theory," in *Telos*, n. 23, Spring 1975, pp. 3-52.

6. This debate got mixed up with the one on imperialism which had begun at the 1907 Congress of the Second International in Stuttgart. Cf. Kurt Mandelbaum's dissertation *Die*

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*1. The critique of political economy and the scientific-theoretical foundations of the analysis of capitalism. The effort of Henryk Grossmann.*

Paul Mattick has justifiably marked the year of appearance of Henryk Grossmann's fundamental work, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz des kapitalistischen Systems* (*The Law of Accumulation and Collapse of the Capitalist System*), 1929, as an important historical event.[7] It is the date of the world economic crisis which forced the leadership of the most important capitalist states to undertake a radical shift: Roosevelt's New Deal which, next to the Soviet experience, constituted the most important reference point of Pollock's analysis. But this date has yet another meaning which is immanent in Grossmann's work: it coincided with the outbreak of the last crisis stemming from the competitive phase of capitalism. At the same time it marks the end of an entire series of debates in the context of one of the most eventful periods in the history of the European labor movement. At the level of economic analysis, it also coincided with the highest point of the critical reappropriation of Marxian "orthodoxy" known to Western Marxism.

Through his sharp critique of the revisionist separation of the theory of value and the theory of collapse, Grossmann put the Marxian theory of accumulation at the center of analysis and thus cleared the field of numerous ambiguities which had been produced by resorting to "*ad hoc* hypotheses."[8] In this way he was able to simultaneously: (1) recover the essentially *political* kernel underlying Rosa Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital* where the assumption of economically unlimited capital accumulation, and thus the endless perfectibility of the system (held by Bernstein, Otto Bauer and Tugan-Baranowski), would have meant for socialism the removal of "the granite foundation of objective historical necessity";[9] (2) criticize Rosa Luxemburg's false starting point which had forced her to a kind of integration of Marxian theory with respect to the problem of expanded reproduction.[10]

In a nutshell, Luxemburg explained the crisis in terms of the *market* rather than in terms of *production*. From her viewpoint, the relationship between

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*Eröterung innerhalb der deutschen Sozialdemokratie über das Problem des Imperialismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1926), esp. pp. 32-42.

7. Leipzig, 1929; reprinted Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1970. Mattick's remark appears in the epilogue to another study by Grossmann which first appeared in 1941: *Marx, die klassische Nationalökonomie und das Problem der Dynamik* (Frankfurt am Main and Vienna, 1969), p. 115.

8. The "necessity of the collapse," writes Grossmann, is "to be established. . .*from Marxian theory itself, therefore on the basis of the law of value*. . ." *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz des Kapitalistischen System, op. cit.*, p. 283.

9. R. Luxemburg, *The Accumulation of Capital: An Anticritique*. ed. K.J. Tarbuck, trans. R. Wichman (New York, 1973), p. 76 [Translation altered.]

10. According to Luxemburg, Marx had "only posed the question of the accumulation of gross capital, but his answer went no further" (*Ibid.*, p. 62). On the history of the question, see along with the dissertation by Mandelbaum mentioned (pp. 34-37), and K.A. Wittfogel, *Geschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Berlin, 1924), pp. 264-272.

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capital and labor was not adequate to explain the full realization of surplus value: hence, the need to introduce "non-capitalist areas" as safety valves to relieve the stress. As a consequence, the focus is shifted from the production of surplus value to the *realization* of surplus value. Grossmann, who based his reading of Marx on solid methodological foundations,[11] redirected the problem to the *relations of production*. For it was in the relations of production (and proceeding from them) that the answer to the *vexata quaestio* as to the objective tendency of the "future" of capitalism was to be sought.[12]

In order to understand Grossmann's position it is necessary at this point to turn back to his studies on the genesis of the critique of political economy and its scientific-theoretical foundations. In this regard, two writings dating back respectively from 1929 and 1932 are important: "Die Aenderung des ursprunglichen Aufbauplans des Marxschen *Kapital* und ihre Ursachen" ("The Changing of the Original Outline of Marx's *Capital* and its Motives")[13] and "Die Wert-Preis-Transformation bei Marx und das Krisenproblem" ("The Value-Price Transformation in Marx and the Problem of Crisis").[14] Although the first essay has been surpassed by more recent works on the historical genesis of *Capital,*[15] it is indicative of Grossmann's interest in the form of Marxian theory—its "mode of representation" of the material analyzed. Inasmuch as he relied upon Marx's letters discussing the different outlines and above all the abandoning of the original project of writing six volumes for six specific problems in favor of a more "abstract" procedure eventually used in *Capital* and in the *Theories of Surplus Value,* Grossmann came to the conclusion "that there was a *necessary inner connection* and not simply an accidental one between the changed outline of Marx's work and the methodological construction of the schemas of reproduction."[16] From this Grossmann derived a kind of parallel between the cyclical representation of the reproduction process and the structuring of the material treated in *Capital.*

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11. Cf. Mattick, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

12. On the general aspects of the problem cf. Grossmann, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz..., op. cit.*, ch. 2; section 11 ("Die Ursachen der Verkennung der Marxschen Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchslehre"), pp. 190-198; and for the critique of Rosa Luxemburg, see section 16, pp. 278-286. The critique of Luxemburg is again taken up in the essay "Die Goldproduktion im Reproduktionsschema von Marx und Rosa Luxemburg," in *Festschrift für Carl Grünberg zum 70. Geburtstag* (Leipzig, 1932), esp. pp. 152-155. Cf. also Christel Neusüss, *Imperialismus und Weltmarktbewegung des Kapitals* (Erlangen, 1972), p. 9ff.

13. (Grünberg's) *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung,* XIV (1929), pp. 305-338.

14. *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung,* vol. I (1932), pp. 55-84.

15. Cf., for example, Otto Morf's *Das Verhältnis von Wissenschaftstheorie und Wirtschaftsgeschichte bei Karl Marx* (Bern, 1951; revised and expanded edition entitled *Geschichte und Dialektik in der politischen Oekonomie* [Frankfurt am Main and Vienna, 1970]) and by Roman Rosdolsky, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Marxschen 'Kapital'* (Frankfurt am Main and Vienna, 1968).

16. "Die Aenderung...," *op.cit.*, p. 313.

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The publication of the *Grundrisse* has shown, however, that this hypothesis was false.[17] As Mattick has appropriately remarked in this context,[18] the controversy of the "Marxologists" over the supposed changes in Marx's work plan would then have a meaning only if, with Grossmann, *Capital* is seen as a "fragment" or a "torso" yet to be completed (Luxemburg).[19] Grossmann had very clearly perceived the kernel of "scientific essentialism" which constitutes the foundation of the Marxian mode of representation: the dialectical procedure of *Capital* does not portray the movement of capitalist production in terms of its *historical immediacy*, but rather, to use Hegel's language, the essence (*das Wesentliche*) of capitalist production," the "essential basic form of the reproduction and accumulation processes."[20] This constitutes the Marxian *method of isolation* with which the necessary abstractions can be derived leading then to the identification of the concrete, i.e., the tendential laws of the capitalist system: "In a general analysis of this kind," writes Marx, "it is usually always assumed that the actual conditions correspond to their conception, or, what is the same, that actual conditions are represented only to the extent that they are typical of their own general case."[21]

In the second essay devoted to the problem of transformation, Grossmann applies in practice his interpretation of the Marxian method in the controversy over the "contradiction" between the first and third volumes of *Capital* (i.e., between the analysis of value and the reality of the domination of prices), which Böhm-Bawerk had discovered in his well-known essay.[22] Grossmann was aware of the significance of Böhm-Bawerk's critique; the confusion which it occasioned was one of the chief factors in the misunderstandings which appeared in the controversy over the reproduction schemes. The danger of a regression to Ricardo was evident in Luxemburg's solution; it was therefore necessary to regain, through an analysis carried out in accordance with the "logic of science," the originality of Marx's formulation of the value concept as distinct from that of the classical economists.

We have already seen how the Marxian model of accumulation abstracted from many empirical elements in order to penetrate to the laws of movement of the capitalist economy. For Grossmann, it hypothesizes an equivalency of

17. The nature of this mistake has been explained with exemplary clarity in Rosdolsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-42. A sharp criticism of Grossmann's essay can also be found in Morf, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-78 (new ed., pp. 104-108).

18. Mattick, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

19. "Die Aenderung...," *op. cit.*, p. 337.

20. *Ibid.* Eugen Varga in his official party critique of Grossmann believed he had refuted him on the methodological level by claiming that Marx's "research method" did not have categorical abstractions as its object but, rather, "concrete reality" (cf. Varga, "Akkumulation und Zusammenbruch des Kapitalismus," *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, vol. IV [1930], p. 62). Thus he showed that he had not understood the underlying complex dialectic moving "from the abstract to the concrete."

21. *Capital*, vol. III (Moscow, 1971), p. 143.

22. "Zum Abschluss des Marxschen Systems," in *Festgaben für Karl Knies* (Berlin, 1896).

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exchange whose measure is labor time. Thus, the system results in the confrontation between workers and capitalists. Resting exclusively on value, this conception is not merely a "simplifying hypothesis" since it presupposes concrete reality, nor is it a "provisional hypothesis" since it remains valid even when the previously bracketed concrete aspects are included. The law of value is therefore *part of reality* and not simply an instrument of research.[23] Despite terminological differences, Grossmann's method coincides with that of one of the most important defenders—and penetrating interpreters—of the dialectic, Roman Rosdolsky. "Not only for Rosdolsky, but also for Grossmann, Marx's abstract view of value is not just a presupposition for knowledge of the empirical world, but contains in kernel form the entire secret of capitalist development and its inevitable end."[24] If Grossmann described Marx's method a "procedure of successive approximations" ("Annäherungsverfahren"),[25] he does not understand by it some kind of one-way and straight-line movement from thought (concepts) to reality, but the gradual process of the "ascent from the abstract to the concrete" as outlined in the "Introduction" (1857) to the *Critique of Political Economy.*

The Marxian method of isolation is the presupposition for understanding the nature of Grossmann's argument concerning the reproduction schemes. The reproduction schemes are to be understood as a necessary moment in the isolation procedure used by Marx. In his critique of Otto Bauer, Grossmann had shown that by departing from Bauer's own assumptions, one can likewise arrive at the collapse of the capitalist system, even if after a longer period of time.[26] With this, Grossmann did *not* want to claim the possibility of a

23. In the "Supplement to Capital, Volume Three," Engels argues against Conrad Schmidt's reduction of the law of value to a pure hypothesis: "The law of value has a far greater and more definite significance for capitalist production than that of a mere hypothesis, not to mention a fiction, even though a necessary one. . . we are dealing here not only with a purely logical process, but with a historical process and its explanatory reflection in thought, the logical consequence of its inner connections" (*Capital*, vol. III, *op.cit.*, p. 895).

24. Mattick, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

25. "Die Wert-Preis-Transformation. . .," *op. cit.*, p. 57. Alfred Schmidt has rightly referred to the scientific and epistemological relevance of this essay (in the introduction, "Geschichte und gegenwärtige Bedeutung," to the reprint of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* [Munich, 1970] p. 54). These theoretical inquiries are developed in the book on dynamics where Grossmann clearly makes the conception of the economic structure of capitalism as depending upon the two-fold character of labor the basis of the qualitative difference between Marxian theory and that of the classical economists. In the two-fold character of labor Marx sees "a decisive rupture between his conception and that of all of his predecessors. As a matter of fact, from his new standpoint of a two-dimensional conception of the economic process he engages repeatedly in a radical critique of classical economists and reproaches them for their one-dimensional theory based solely on value." (*Marx, die klassische nationalökonomie. . ., op.cit.*, p. 19). Hence Grossmann forcefully rejects the thesis whereby Marxian value theory represents the further development and completion of the presuppositions of classical theorists (a thesis defended, for example, by Maurice Dobb in *Political Economy and Capitalism* [London, 1937]).

26. O. Bauer, "Die Akkumulation des Kapitals," *Die neue Zeit*, XXXI (1912-13), pp. 831-838; 826-62-874. According to the Polish economists O. Lange and T. Kowalik, Bauer's history has been vindicated and Marx refuted; "a considerable part of social production," writes Kowalik, "can alternatively be used as a means of production and for the purpose of private consumption;" this fact is confirmed by the practice of socialist countries where accumulation

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schematic presentation of the collapse (thus Sweezy's criticism in *The Theory of Capitalist Development* turns out to be *methodologically* unfounded),[27] but only to get rid of the revisionist illusion that one could provide a "scientific" proof for the unlimited developmental capacity of accumulation. "That the clique of neo-harmonists," wrote Grossmann in a letter to Paul Mattick dated July 18, 1937, "the Hilferdings and Otto Bauers, systematically tried to distort Marx for decades...does not mean that *we* should likewise follow the neo-harmonists. Once you think Marxian thought consistently to the end, how can a crisis arise in the simple reproduction process which seems to be characterized everywhere by such an harmonious equilibrium? Only then will you discover in Marx theoretical elaborations of which the 'philosophers' have not even dreamed, even those such as K. Korsch who imagined that they understood some Marxian economics."[28]

As Mattick—student and disciple of Grossmann—later remarked,[29] Grossmann's intervention in the controversy over the reproduction schemes helped obscure the core of his interpretation, which was not based on the harmony-disharmony of exchange relations in the reproduction schemes, but on the law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit in connection with the growing organic composition of capital.[30] Grossmann's lack of success in

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takes place above all in Department II, while the major part of Department I is invested (cf. T. Kowalik, *The Economic Theory of Rosa Luxemburg* (Warsaw, 1963; in Polish), p. 208). This predilection of Polish economists for a representative of the "clique of new-harmonists" is by no means surprising given that in the Soviet editions of Luxemburg's *Accumulation of Capital*, Bauer's scheme is printed as an appendix—obviously as an antidote (e.g. in the edition of 1934, pp. 339-358).

27. P.M. Sweezy, *The Theory of Capitalist Development* (New York, 1968), p. 209ff. See also Grossmann's unmistakable formulation: "The neo-harmonists glorify the equilibrium scheme, not because it is a useful methodological tool, but because—in confusing the research method with the phenomena to be investigated—they believed they could read out of the equilibrium scheme the tendency of capitalism towards equilibrium." (*Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz...op. cit.*, p. 95fn.). Rosdolsky has correctly shown that this mistake can only be explained by a false understanding of Marxian methodology on the part of the Austro-Marxists (cf. *op. cit.*, p. 521). That this methodological deficiency is found again in Sweezy is by no means accidental.

28. Appended to *Marx, die klassische Nationalökonomie...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 112-113.

29. Mattick, *op. cit.*, p. 119. —See also Mattick's article, "The Permanent Crisis. Henryk Grossmann's Interpretation of Marx's Theory of Capitalist Accumulation," *International Council Correspondence*, no. 2 (Nov., 1934), esp. pp. 4-9.

30. That Grossmann's theory was based upon the tendential fall in the rate of profit has already been pointed out by Natalie Moszkowska who rejected it; cf. ch. 4 of her book *Zur Kritik moderner Krisentheorien* (Prague, 1935). In regard to the revision of the law cf. *Ibid.*, p. 46. See also her earlier study, *Das Marxsche System. Ein Beitrag zu dessen Ausbau* (Berlin, 1929), p. 118, where it is suggested that the law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit is not an historical, but a dynamic law which does not confirm any facts. Instead it simply formulates the mutual dependence of two quantities (surplus-value and rate of profit); i.e., if the first remains constant, the second falls and whenever the second remains constant, the first rises. According to Moszkowska, this law would consequently have to be characterized instead as the "law of the tendential rise of the rate of surplus value." —An analysis which shows, on the contrary, remarkable similarities with Grossmann's position is E. Preiser's in "Das Wesen der Marxschen Krisentheorie," in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Festschrift für Franz Oppenheimer zu seinem 60. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt am Main, 1924).

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subsequent developments of Marxist economic criticism must be traced back to this not unambiguous intervention. Even if we accept that Sweezy's careless disposal of his theses represents neither a solution of the substantive problems, nor touches upon the critical and methodological basis of Grossmann's analysis, we are forced to conclude at the same time that even today (aside from Mattick) a genuinely *critical* reception of his works is still lacking.[31]

Another widespread prejudice concerning Grossmann is that he, together with Luxemburg, was one of the most radical defenders of capitalism's "automatic" collapse—a view which would contradict the "radical" and "spontaneist" inclinations of both because it would result in the denial of revolutionary subjectivity.[32] Despite the ambiguities and misunderstandings which had arisen from his critique of Bauer, Grossmann had neither said nor thought that the collapse would follow "automatically," or that it would be possible to predict the exact point in time. Rather, it is the class struggle which must be activated within the cyclical crisis process, thus interrupting the reconstruction of the capitalist contradiction by transforming it into an active, *autonomous* moment: the revolution for a new society. This is the true meaning of the alternative "socialism or barbarism." "No economic system," explained Grossmann unmistakably, "however weak it may ever be, collapses 'automatically'; it must be overthrown."[33]

It is here that the political aspect of Grossmann's effort emerges. The

31. Although holding an ambivalent position, Colletti himself manifests a certain propensity for Sweezy's critique of Grossmann. Cf. L. Colletti and C. Napoleoni, *Il Futuro del Capitalismo. Crollo o Sviluppo?* (Bari, 1970), p. 443. A further confirmation of the strictly Marxian basis of Grossmann's theory is found in his two-fold polemic: on the one hand with Kautsky and Luxemburg (and then Sternberg), who relegated to the past the tendency toward increasing misery and derived the betterment of the living conditions of the working class from competition, i.e., from the market; and on the other hand, with Bukharin, who "spatially" displaced the tendency toward increasing misery by asserting that the position of the working class in the highly developed countries is improved at the expense of colonial countries (a thesis defended even today by "fashionable" economists). In his book (cf. pp. 587-603), Grossmann shows that both these theses rest on a misunderstanding of Marx's wage theory. Interesting in this contest is the polemic against Fritz Sternberg, a defender of Rosa Luxemburg's theory and author of an important book on imperialism (*Der Imperialismus* [Berlin, 1926]). This book was sharply criticized by Grossmann ("Eine neue Theorie über Imperialismus und soziale Revolution," *Grünberg's Archiv*, XIII [1928], pp. 141-192). Sternberg answered two years later with the pamphlet: *Eine Umwälzung der Wissenschaft? Kritik des Buches von Henryk Grossmann. Zugleich eine positive Analyse des Imperialismus* (Berlin, 1930).

32. A good example of it is the criticism by A. Braunthal in the essay "Der Zusammenbruch der Zusammenbruchstheorie," *Die Gesellschaft*, VI (Heft 10, 1929), as well as in his recently reappeared book *Die Entwicklungstendenzen der kapitalistischen Wirtschaft* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), esp. pp. 28-39. It should be added that the position of the Left Communists in general and the Council Communists in particular was not uniform, especially with reference to the question of collapse, as is confirmed by Karl Korsch's criticism of Grossmann (Korsch, "Ueber einige grundsätzliche Voraussetzungen für eine materialistische Diskussion der Krisentheorie," *Proletarier*, I, no. 1 [Feb., 1933], pp. 20-25) and the exchange between Mattick and Pannekoek in *Rätekorrespondenz* (cf. A. Pannekoek, "Die Zusammenbruchstheorie des Kapitalismus," no. 1 (June, 1934); P. Mattick, "Zur marxistischen Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchstheorie," no. 4 (Sept., 1934).

33. Grossmann, "The Evolutionist Revolt against Classical Economics," *The Journal of Political Economy*, vol. III (Dec., 1943), p. 520.

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abstract analysis of capitalism and the determination of the tendential laws are nothing other than the *prolegomena* to the problem of class consciousness, the necessary presupposition of which would be described today as the "problematic of constitution";[34] "Obviously as a *dialectical* Marxist I know that both sides of the process, the objective and the subjective elements, mutually influence one another. In the class struggle these factors fuse. One cannot 'wait' until *first* the 'objective' conditions are there, and only *then* allow the 'subjective' ones to operate. That would be an inadequate mechanical conception which is alien to me. But *for the purposes of analysis* I must utilize the abstract procedure of isolating particular elements in order to show the essential functions of each element. Lenin often speaks of the revolutionary situation which must be objectively given as a presupposition for the active and victorious intervention of the proletariat. My theory of collapse does not aim at the exclusion of this active intervention, but rather wants to show when and under what conditions such an objectively given revolutionary situation can and does arise."[35]

It is no accident that it is precisely in Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness* that one finds the philosophical equivalent of Grossmann's great attempt at a critical-revolutionary re-appropriation of Marxian categories.[36] For the "Luxemburgian" Lukács of 1923, the "catastrophe theory of history"[37] is the continuing impetus for "the process of proletarian knowledge" [*proletarischen Erkenntnisprozess*] and for the effect of class in the dialectical context of the historical process: "The proletariat is..at one and the same time the product of the permanent crisis in capitalism and instrument of those tendencies which drive capitalism towards crisis... By recognizing its situation it acts. By combating capitalism it discovers its own place in society. But the class consciousness of the proletariat, the truth of the process 'as subject,' is itself far from stable or constant; it does not advance according to mechanical laws. It is the consciousness of the dialectical process itself; it is likewise a dialectical concept. For the practical and active side of class consciousness, its true essence can then only become visible in its authentic form when the historical process imperiously requires its coming

34. Cf. H.J. Krahl, *Konstitution und Klassenkampf* (Frankfurt am Main, 1971), pp. 82-97 and 323-329.

35. H. Grossmann, letter to P. Mattick on June 21, 1931; in the appendix to *Marx, die klassische Nationalökonomie...*, *op.cit.*, p. 88. Here once again Grossmann's strictly Marxian approach is evident: "It comes to surface here in a purely economic way from the standpoint of capitalist production itself—i.e., from the *bourgeois standpoint*, within the limits of capitalist understanding; to wit, it has a barrier, which is relative, not an absolute, but only a historical mode of production corresponding to a definite limited epoch in the development of the material requirements of production" (*Capital*, vol. III, *op.cit.*, p. 259). My emphasis.

36. On the question of the theoretical and political meaning of Lukács' book see the discussion between F. Cerutti, D. Claussen, H.J. Krahl, O. Negt and A. Schmidt in the anthology *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein heute* (Frankfurt am Main: Schwarze Reihe No. 12, 1971), esp. pp. 18-25.

37. The expression comes from Alfred Schmidt, *Geschichte und Struktur* (Munich, 1971), p. 132.

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into force, i.e., when an acute crisis in the economy drives it to action."[38]

Even with their traditional elements, Grossmann's and Lukács' efforts represent for us today the sole reference points to be taken seriously for the reconstruction of a critique of political economy which is appropriate both for the present context of *social* capitalistic organization and for a scientific re-constitution of class consciousness.

*2. From the crisis of competitive capitalism to its transformation. The "new object" of Pollock's analysis.*

As I pointed out in the beginning, Grossmann's work represents not only the best attempt at a critical re-appropriation of Marxian "orthodoxy" on the level of economic ("abstract") analysis, but it also marks the closing of an epoch, of an historical cycle which encompasses both the development of capitalism and of its theory. Grossmann's effort stands *before* the profound structural transformations to be undertaken by capital after the 1929 crisis, i.e., *before* the monopolistic and state capitalistic form was revealed ever more clearly in the course of the 1940s. And this divides us from his work and from the last crisis of overproduction generated by the anarchy of the competitive mechanism and the uncontrollable convulsions of the old "automatic character of the market."

Grossmann's book closed with the radical claim of the "impossibility of 'regulating' production on the basis of the existing economic order."[39] Pollock's analysis, carried out in the broad and contradictory empirical context of the crisis, proceeds instead from the inverse presupposition: the crisis which had broken out in Wall Street on "Black Thursday," spreading to all capitalist countries, is not the beginning of the final catastrophe but the end of a phase, the competitive phase of capitalism. "What is coming to an end is not capitalism, but its liberal phase."[40] A closer examination of the dynamic of the crisis prefigured the prospects for an "economically planned new order." These prospects indicate, however, only a tendential direction which in itself is not necessary: the style of the "planned re-ordering" cannot be concretely determined beforehand, but only abstractly outlined. Economic

38. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness,* trans. Rodney Livingstone (London, 1971), p. 40. In another place Lukács writes: "The objective economic evolution could no more than create the position of the proletariat in the production process. It was this position that determined its point of view. But the objective evolution could only give the proletariat the opportunity and the necessity to change society. Any transformation can only come about as the product of the—free—action of the proletariat itself." *Ibid.*, p. 209.

39. Grossmann, *Das Akkumulations- und Zusammenbruchsgesetz, op.cit.*, p. 623. In the introduction to the new edition of Grossmann's book (Frankfurt am Main, 1967), Wolf Rosenbaum pointed out the limits of the work stemming from the failure to treat the remaining causes which bring forth the crisis and the tendencies counteracting the tendential fall in the rate of profit. On this point see the discussion of the book by Gillman (*The Falling Rate of Profit* [London, 1957]) in the anthology *Kapitalismus und Krise. Eine Kontroverse um das Gesetz des tendentziellen Falls der Profitrate* (Frankfurt am Main and Vienna, 1970), esp. the contribution by Paul Mattick, "Werttheorie und Kapitalakkumulation," pp. 7-34.

40. Pollock, "Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, Vol. II (1933), p. 350.

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theoreticians can only outline different models of planning as a contribution to the construction of a "closed theory. . .which could serve a future economic policy as a means of orientation."[41] Referring to Lorwin,[42] Pollock arranged these models in a scheme whose criteria are characterized by two main types of planned economy: the capitalist type (resting on the "general cartel" of Hilferding and the preservation of private ownership of the means of production), and the socialist (resting on the collective ownership of the means of production). These models have in common the replacement of the old automatism based on "self-regulation" by a plan. Pollock's "abstract" description was by no means the result of a technocratic deformation but was grounded in the historical circumstance of the simultaneity of the crisis—and also in a theoretical phenomenon which was closely bound up with this circumstance: in the deep-going process of revision to which the most important representatives of liberalism subjected their theories.[43]

"Without a doubt it can be established that the crisis can be overcome with *capitalistic means* and that 'monopolistic' capitalism be able to continue existing at least for the forseeable future."[44] With that, Pollock did not want to maintain that the system was able to realize a perfect steering of the cyclic movement and a total transcendence of all contradictions: "There is considerable evidence, to be sure, that in this administered capitalism the depressions will be longer, the boom phases shorter and stronger, and the crises more destructive than in the times of 'free competition,' but its 'automatic' collapse is not to be expected. There is no *purely economic* irrepressible compulsion to replace it with another economic system."[45]

The statement of the problem on this point is more complicated than it appears at first sight. Pollock does not deny the "catastrophic" character of the crisis—on the contrary he sharply polemicizes against the harmonizing representations of "pre-war capitalism" in which the huge destructions brought forth by the automatism of the market were defined as "frictions;"[46] but at the same time, he did not view it (like Grossmann) as the *memento mori* of the system and felt that it could be overcome by *capitalistic means.* The market mechanism is no longer able to realize the "optimal adjustment" of productive forces to demand; hence the need arises for an economically planned new order: "The manifest difficulties of the capitalist system, as well as the Russian planning efforts whose collapse was wrongly prophesized by nearly all experts, are the main reasons why today economic planning is being discussed everywhere."[47] The "abstract" statement of the problem thus flows

41. "Die gegenwärtige Lage des Kapitalismus. . .," *op.cit.*, p. 27.
42. Cf. L. Lorwin, *The Problem of Economic Planning* (Amsterdam, 1931).
43. Cf. here the detailed review of Keynes' *General Theory* which Pollock, together with Mandelbaum, had written under the pseudonym "Erich Baumann:" "Keynes Revision der liberalistischen Nationalökonomie," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. V (1936), pp. 384-403.
44. "Die gegenwärtige Lage des Kapitalismus. . .," *op.cit.*, p. 16. My emphasis.
45. *Ibid.* My emphasis.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

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into the laborious economic and social transition process in which, on the one hand, the western capitalist states (above all the United States) and, on the other, the Soviet Union, began to discover new forms which could again set in motion the process of accumulation; but it is the Soviet experience which constitutes the continuing reference point for the "new course" of the capitalist economy.[48]

"It is part of the fundamental understanding of Marxian economic theory that a new economic system can come into being only when its economic and social presuppositions, at least in their rudiments, are prefigured at least *in nuce* in the older system and when the relations of production have become fetters on the productive forces. Just as in France toward the end of the 18th century, where the abandonment of the old bonds resulted in rapid economic development because under the rubble of the residual feudal economy the technical, economic and social presuppositions for the laissez-faire system were already at hand, the unleashing of the existing forces of production by an economically planned new order is only to be anticipated when its presuppositions are already given. Most generally, its economic preconditions —for now the political ones will be disregarded—can be formulated as follows: the major weight of industrial production must be shifted to large-scale mass production enterprise and the process of centralization must reach a certain level; the technical and organizational means for mastering the tasks of a centralized economic administration must be already known; and a considerable reserve of productivity must be available to be utilized through the application of the methods of economic planning. It can be easily demonstrated that all these economic presuppositions are to a great extent at hand in the great industrial nations, as well as in the world economy."[49]

This same development, which had proven fatal for the "normal" operation of automatic market mechanisms, created the presupposition for the planned steering of the economic process. The timing and character of this steering could take many different forms; they are a function of complex political conditions and of the initiative of the "economic subjects:" possibilities for a "socialist" orientation of economic planning are "slight so long as the influence of those strata, which are interested because of their class position is not sufficient for a transformation."[50]

Although Pollock's analysis was carried out with exemplary clarity and precision, it left the underlying problems open, rather than resolving them. The principles from which it departed were, to be sure, those of Marx; they were based upon the conflict between the forces and relations of production. Yet, the new qualities of contemporary processes rendered necessary if not a revision, at least a contemporary supplement to the old theoretical premises. The historical rupture of 1917 had lead to a decisive change within the world

48. Cf. on this point the pages on "war communism" and the NEP in the previously cited book, *Die planwirtschaftlichen Versuche in der Sowjetunion*, esp. pp. 96-111 and 126-170.
49. "Die gegenwärtige Lage des Kapitalismus...," *op.cit.*, pp. 19ff.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

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economy by introducing a new element in the overall dynamic of the process: a *political* element which necessitated a similarly *political* reaction from the side of capital. Otherwise the end of capitalism would have coincided with the end of the *laissez-faire* system. A mere retreat to orthodoxy, where the decisive role of the political factor would not have been focused on would have been absolutely inadequate because it would have given no answer to the *new* problems and would not have grasped the *morphological novelty* of the international situation. Horkheimer correctly noted in the first issue of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* that the objective weight of the general crisis was represented subjectively in an "inner crisis of science."[51] One has to realize the following: it was a matter of critical circumstances in conjunction with the special historical situation (Russian Revolution, defeat of the Revolution in the West, tendency toward monopoly capitalism) without which the genesis of Critical Theory and its *political conditioning* cannot be understood. "To the extent that we can speak of a crisis of science," wrote Horkheimer, "it is not to be separated from the general crisis. Historical development has brought with it a fettering of science as a production force which affects accordingly its parts, the content and the form, the material as well as the method. Furthermore, science as a means of production is not correspondingly utilized. The understanding of the crisis of science depends on the correct theory of the contemporary social situation, for presently science, as a social function, mirrors the contradictions of society."[52]

Symptomatic of this difficulty in adapting "science" to the new reality is Pollock's essay, "Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise" ("Remarks on Economic Crisis").[53] Here Pollock found himself confronted with an especially resistant object of investigation which was also not adequately treated by Marx. Although the defender of an "endogenous" crisis theory, he still did not overlook—in agreement with Marx—the "exogenous" factors which could explain the particularities of the crisis. He rightly viewed the crisis as a complex phenomenon brought forth by a variety of causes,[54] which partly explains the lack of an adequate level of abstraction. Unlike Grossmann, however, he lacked a consideration of the law of accumulation and any reference to the law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit (although, as we will see, the consequences of his approach seem to suggest an *implicit* revision of this law). Consequently this complicates the locating of Pollock within the old and new discussions of crisis theory.

Marx had demonstrated the "general, abstract possibility of crisis"[55] in the separation of supply and demand. But the most general form of the crisis is not its cause. In order to explain the phenomenon of the crisis, one must go

51. Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen über Wissenschaft und Krise," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, I (1932), p. 4.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
53. "Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise," *op.cit.*
54. *Ibid.*, pp. 325ff.
55. Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Part II (Moscow, 1968), p. 509.

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back to the distinction between simple commodity production and capitalist production—a distinction which represents not only a qualitative difference but also an actual break between Marxian theory and the theories of the classical economics.[56] The *real* cause of the crisis lies in the *fall* of the profit rate; this determines the tendency of capitalists to retain capital in monetary form (a tendency characterized by Keynes as "liquidity preference"). Nevertheless, the "determinant" of the fall of the rate of profit is still hotly debated. In the famous third section of the third volume of *Capital,* Marx refers it back to the inadequacy of the rate of surplus value in relation to the organic composition of capital. In this case the value system would remain unchanged. The other cause for the sinking of the profit rate could lie in the impossibility of selling the product according to its value, i.e., it could be a matter of the lack of "real demand" (or, with Marx, of the lack of "effective consumption"). Both these possibilities correspond to two different interpretations of crisis which we can schematize as follows:[57] (a) that interpretation which depends on the tendential fall in the rate of profit; and (b) the theory of the "realization crisis" which can be differentiated into two types: (1) "disproportionality theory';" and (2) "underconsumption theory."

We will now attempt to summarize the theses contained in these interpretations and describe them in a very simplified manner. (a) The cause of the crisis is not in the disproportionality between production and consumption, but is to be sought within production itself, i.e., in the basic contradiction between the forces and relations of production. The crisis then represents a forcible countermeasure of the system against the decline of the rate of profit—as the means to which capital reverts in order to repair the damages of "prosperity." The transition of the crisis into depression, the subsequent re-formation of the reserve army, and the devaluation of capital are the connecting links of the cyclical chain through which the profitability

56. The possibility of crisis is already contained in simple commodity circulation (C-M-C), i.e., where the transition is made from a simple commodity exchange (C-C) to the most developed forms of exchange and where then money emerges, having the function of separating in time buying and selling. Thanks to money the producers no longer need to search for "buyers" and *vice versa.* Also, though simple commodity circulation already contains the possibility of a disruption (through the separation of buying and selling) of the exchange process, there is still no cause for this actually to occur. In the investigation of the forms which commodity circulation assumes, Marx notices that these forms include the possibility—but only the possibility—of crisis, because for their concretion an entire context of relations is necessary which do not yet exist in simple commodity exchange. Proof for this is the fact that—even if there are no crises without commodity and money circulation—there was commodity and money circulation long before capitalist production without this resulting in crisis. Therefore, it is important to hold to this point because the failure to differentiate clearly between simple commodity production and capitalist production (with all the historical implications which go along with it) constitutes the reason why classical economists came to reject the phenomenon of crisis. Without explicating this argument any further here, I would like to note that for us the places where Marx polemicizes against Say and Ricardo have as *critique* of *economies* an enormous *scientific-theoretical* meaning. (Cf. *Theories of Surplus Value,* Part II, *op.cit.,* pp. 507-513.)

57. This formulation is based largely on comments by Sweezy (see *The Theory of Capitalist Development, op.cit.,* pp. 147-186).

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of production and the bases for the resumption of acumulation are reconstituted. (Among the most important representatives of this theory belong Preiser, Grossmann, Mattick and, with considerable differences, Dobb.)[58]

(b) The fall in the profit rate is not to be explained by accumulation and the increase in the organic composition of capital, but by the impossibility of *realizing* surplus value because the capitalists do not succeed in selling commodities at their value. (One must at the same time be aware of the internal divisions within this interpretation, because it is precisely in the realm of the "realization crisis" that the different currents of right and left revisionism as well as more "up to date"[59] economic analyses operate.)

(1) The crisis is caused by disproportionate production, i.e., by an uneven division of social labor among particular spheres of production. The increase or decrease of market value on the basis of this disproportionality results in the wandering of capital from one branch of production to another. (Marx himself had not excluded the possibility that this disproportionality was traceable to *the lack of a "plan"* in as much as the entrepreneur in competitive capitalism can determine the level of real market demand only *a posteriori*. And if it affects an especially important sector of production, this leads to disequilibrium in the spheres essential to life and would in the end bring forth the crisis.) Tugan-Baranowski accepted the hypothesis of disproportionality as the sole explanation for crisis and thus contested the theory which depended upon the tendential fall in the profit rate, as well as the theory of underconsumption. Thus he came to deny the pathological character of the diseases of the system; he even tried, on the basis of the reproduction schemes in the second volume of *Capital*, to prove the possibility of unlimited stabilization, so far as the proportionalities could be maintained —a maintenance which would be guaranteed ever more strongly by the development of monopolistic concentration, by the trusts and growing state controls, whereby the anarchy at the societal level would be continuously reduced. (The theory of the "disproportionality crisis" has played an important role in the Second International—see Hilferding—as well as in Russian Marxism—see Lenin's polemic against "economic romanticism.")[60]

58. Cf. *Capital*, vol. I, 7th section and vol. III, 15th section, where crisis theory takes the form of a theory of cycles.

59. One is reminded here of Arghiri Emannuel's book *Unequal Exchange*, trans. Brian Pearce (London, 1972) which has aroused a considerable stir.

60. Cf. M.J. Tugan-Baranowski, *Studien zur Theorie und Geschichte der Handelskrisen in England* (Jena, 1901) and *Modern Socialism in its Historical Development*, trans. M.I. Redmount (New York, 1966); R. Hilferding, *Das Finanzkapital* (Vienna, 1927); Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats," *Works*, vol. I (Moscow, 1960), pp. 129-332. Lenin not only leaves the theories of Bulgakov and Tugan untouched, but even defends them against their critics; thus, for example, against Struve who had raised the objection that they had derived "the harmony between production and consumption" from the Marxian schemes (cf. "A Note on the Question of the Market Theory," *Works*, vol. IV, *op.cit.*, pp. 55-56). Despite the objective difficulty of finding a unified solution to the crisis problem, it must be pointed out that the Leninist postulate of the necessary

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(2) The crisis arises from the inability of capitalism to create an adequate market for the requirements of its own production. Let us consider the thesis of this interpretation in the formulation of its most well-known current representative: "The real task of an underconsumption theory is to demonstrate that capitalism has an inherent *tendency* to expand the capacity to produce consumption goods more rapidly than the demand for consumption goods. To put it another way, it must be shown that there is a *tendency* to utilize resources in such a way as to distort the relation between potential supply of and the potential demand for consumption goods."[61] The principle of this interpretation suggests that the logic of capitalism is one of *production for consumption*—and not, as Marx had many times explained, that of *production for production.* ("Underconsumption theory," strongly influenced by the teachings of Sismondi and Malthus, spread in the second half of the last century in Germany through the work of Rodbertus and, with Lassalle and Dühring, was transformed from the classical ideology of landowners into the "base" of the interpretations of German social democracy and the Second International. Among its most important defenders are Fritz Sternberg and, today, Sweezy.)[62]

Only with difficulty can Pollock's interpretation be placed in this scheme. This could be easily clarified from an historical viewpoint by the "crisis of science," of which Horkheimer spoke and which expressed itself in the difficulties of economic theory after the First World War and the October Revolution. From a *theoretical* viewpoint, however, numerous problems arise. As we have seen, Pollock specifically starts out from the classical scheme which rests upon the basic contradiction between the forces and relations of production. He is inclined, nevertheless, to unite this scheme with the hypothesis which is typical of the "disproportionality crisis." According to this hypothesis, only a *plan* or some self-regulation (which for Grossmann was absolutely impossible in a capitalist system) can bring to a halt the destructive process caused by the continuous wandering of capital from one sector of production to another, and thereby eliminate the disproportionalities which constitute the greatest obstacle to overcoming the crisis. We could conclude that with Pollock's analysis we are dealing with a new and original combination of the classical Marxian interpretation re-elaborated by Grossmann (a)

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subsumption of the relations between production and consumption under the concept of *proportionality* approaches, in a questionable way, the theory of the "lack of proportionality" (or the "lack of a plan" as one would say today) as is typical for the crisis interpretation of Tugan-Baranowski.

61. Sweezy, *op.cit.*, p. 180.

62. In his presentation Sweezy also relegates Rosa Luxemburg (who he even characterizes as "the queen of the underconsumptionists," *op.cit.*, p. 171) to this subcategory. Even if there is no doubt that Rosa Luxemburg is a representative of the theory of the realization crisis, in my opinion one cannot include her with the "underconsumptionists." Although in parts of *The Accumulation of Capital* she approaches such an interpretation, the characterization of her theory as "underconsumptionism" is tantamount to levelling the theory and in the end robbing it of its political meaning.

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and the "disproportionality crisis" (b). This allows Pollock to establish a connection between controllability and the mutual correction between the two theories, whereby onesidedness can be avoided while introducing the concept of *plan*. This connection forces Pollock to revise the dialectic between the forces and relations of production. In this "adjustment" of the conflict Pollock recognized the menacing authoritarian consequences of the planned control of all economic processes as they appeared to be assumed by the state to an increasing degree. But let us consider the decisive points of Pollock's analysis somewhat more closely.

In the essay on the crisis, Pollock refers to the tendency of capitalist planning to intervene actively in the dynamic of the conflict between the forces and relations of production (a conflict which "has become more intense than it has ever been before"), introducing a kind of "adjustment process." This process operated in a twofold manner: through the forcible destruction of excess productive forces (which Pollock described as the "Procrustean method"), and through the "relaxation of the fetters" with which capital binds production relations. Both these methods "leave the *foundations* of the capitalist system untouched"; they allow themselves to be "differentiated sharply only in thought" since they are in fact united in the practice of capitalist management.[63] The method of "relaxing the fetters" appears to Pollock as the stronger in the long run: in practice it works itself out in an increasing limitation of the individual owner's control over his own capital. In fact, this control is increasingly transferred over to "large-scale units" or even the state. Pollock's train of thought gets complicated at this point because he does not succeed in clearly determining the *limits* of the process of concentration. When the steering of the economic process is carried out by a central state authority, we reach an extreme point where the relations of production cannot be further modified without eliminating the foundations of the capitalist system.[64] Pollock's ambiguity mirrored a real process: through his investigations of the developments in the German and American economies, he had come to realize that capitalist steering was on the verge of giving its "mocking" answer to the crisis. In an "inverted" way, capitalism was carrying out that model of planned economy which the theoreticians of the *Zeitschrift*

63. Cf. Pollock, "Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise," *op.cit.*, p. 338. To be sure, Pollock is not the only theorist where one finds a combination of different crisis theories. Lenin, for example, as an adherent of the disproportionality theory which he derived from the anarchy of capitalist production, supplemented his conception with the theory of underconsumption: "...the irregular production of a surplus-product (crises) is inevitable in capitalist society as a result of the disturbance in proportion between the various branches of industry. But a certain state of consumption is one of the elements of proportion" ("Reply to Mr. P. Nezhdanov [1899]," *Works*, vol. IV, *op.cit.*, p. 161 n). The theory of the disproportionality crisis is modified here in such a way that the proportionality between the different branches of production also depends on the relations of consumption. A similar combination is found with Bukharin, for whom the crisis arises from the "disproportionalities of social production" while the factor of consumption represents "a part of this disproportionality" ("Der Imperialismus und die Akkumulation des Kapitals," *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, I (1925-26), pp. 232-233).

64. Cf. Pollock, *op.cit.*, p. 348.

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had seen as the only possible way out of the catastrophic crisis. Rather than placing such processes under the control of "associated individuals" and utilizing them for the welfare and happiness of the "majority of men," the "rational" administration of economic processes resulted in further control by the strongest "monopolistic groups" in German National Socialism and, with different methods, in the U.S. New Deal. It was up to these monopolistic groups to arbitrarily decide on "the weal and woe of all remaining economic subjects, owners of capital, and workers."[65] Thus, that tendency which Pollock and Mandelbaum had emphasized in their essay "Autarkie und Planwirtschaft" ("Autarky and Economic Planning")[66] began to take shape. It proved to be the determining element of the present form of the capitalist social order: state intervention in the economy. In so far as National Socialism corresponded to this process (although it only expressed the first and most primitive phase), it was by no means the sign of a "backward step" or mere barbarism, but rather the logical result of the *concentration process:* "Parlamentarianism was poorly suited to this end; it corresponded to a less advanced conglomeration of economic power. As a consequence of the release from the constraints of parlamentarianism and having at their disposal the entire apparatus of the psychic domination of the masses, during this period governments appear to be independent from classes and to stand above society without partisanship."[67]

Despite these important observations, the descriptive aspects of Pollock's analysis predominated over the critical. This is particularly apparent in the essay "State Capitalism."[68] Here the pure description empties the object of all its contradictory components, lending it the character of the "bad" abstraction of the Weberian "ideal type." One has the clear impression that Pollock has driven to an extreme point his own tendency (which was already evident in his first works)[69] to rehabilitate "masks," i.e., the different

65. *Ibid.*, p. 349.

66. Under the pseudonym "Kurt Baumann" in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, vol. II (1933), pp. 79-103.

67. "Bemerkungen zur Wirtschaftskrise," *op.cit.*, p. 353.

68. "State Capitalism," *op.cit., passim.* An investigation of the leading tendencies of state capitalism which is symptomatic of the resonance of this theme since the beginning of the 1930s appears in Carl Steuermann (that is, Otto Rühle), *Weltkrise-Weltwende. Kurs auf Staatskapitalismus* (Berlin, 1931); see esp. pp. 213-255 (also very interesting is the chapter on the Soviet Union, pp. 183ff).

69. Cf. the essay on Marx's money theory in *Grünberg's Archiv*, XIII (1928), pp. 193-209, where the theses contained in the dissertation are taken up again (*Die Geldtheorie von Karl Marx* [Frankfurt am Main, March, 1923], unpublished). The approach of Pollock's work was in any case correct and strictly 'orthodox' Marxist in so far as it rested on the dialectic of essence and appearance and on the close connection between money and commodity analysis in Marx. That is all the more important since the most thorough contemporary researchers have recently referred, on the basis of the *Grundrisse* (which Pollock could not have known at that time), to the constitutive meaning of the above-named relation for the structure of Marxian theory. Cf. Rosdolsky, *op.cit.*, p. 154ff, and Wygodsky, *Die Geschichte einer grossen Entdeckung* (Berlin, 1967), p. 54. Despite the tendency of theory to withdraw from the level of "essence" (i.e., the investigation of the categorical forms in the functioning of the social relations of production) to

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fetishized forms of capitalist economic processes: money, state, technology.[70]

The historical force with which the tendency toward "state capitalism" had manifested itself thus giving rise to the monstrous possibilities of despotic controls through the institutionalized forms of power, had prevented the economist from critically receiving the new developments and locating the dialectical elements within this new "totality." Thus, he mistook as the essence the illusory character of the "alien power" of the fetishized forms of the economic process, while accepting as reality the uncontradictory and "one-dimensional" façade of socialized despotism: "Governmental control of production and distribution provides the means with which the economic causes of depressions, cumulative processes of destruction, and unemployment due to lack of capital can be eliminated. We can even say that economics as a social science has lost its object under state capitalism."[71]

The connections between Pollock's conclusions and those of the most important philosophical representative of the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* are evident. These connections exist not only with respect to conclusions, but also in regard to the complex development of the *Zeitschrift*. We do not make this observation only in order to provide a useful contribution to the analysis of the important current of thought imprecisely referred to as the "Frankfurt School."[72] Above all, the historical phases of the development of Critical Theory must be seen in relation to these economic-theoretical contributions which have, up to now, been unjustifiably passed over; after that one can move on to investigate in the most advanced phase (that of the 1930s) the causes of the inadequate elaboration of the relationship between theory and praxis.

*3. Socialization of work and Critical Theory. The critique of political economy as a condition of the ability to make history.*

In the essay "The Struggle Against Liberalism in the Totalitarian View of the State" (1934), Marcuse described—with explicit reference to Pollock's analysis—the nature of the substantial continuity between the liberal and the totalitarian conceptions with the following words: "This rough sketch of liberalist social theory has shown how many elements of the totalitarian view of the state are already present in it. Taking the economic structure as a point of reference, we see an almost unbroken continuity in the development of the

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the level of "appearance" (i.e., the emphasis on the "masks" of the total economic process), Pollock's analysis is anything but naive.

70. Investigations of the social consequences of the automation of work processes have almost exclusively preoccupied Pollock's interest in the post-war period; they are embodied in the well-known book *Automation* (2nd rev. ed., Frankfurt am Main, 1964).

71. "State Capitalism," *op.cit.*, p. 217.

72. Hence, I do not want to subscribe by any means to the subsumption of Critical Theory under the concept of the "idealistic reaction to science" with which some authors believe they have disposed of it (cf. Göran Therborn, "The Frankfurt School," *New Left Review*, No. 63 [Sept.-Oct., 1970], pp. 65-96; and Lucio Colletti, *Marxism and Hegel*, trans. Lawrence Garner [London, 1973], pp. 173-177).

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social theory. We shall here assume some prior knowledge of the economic foundations of this development from liberalist to totalitarian theory (reference to Pollock's analysis): they are all essentially part of the transformation of capitalist society from mercantile and industrial capitalism, based on the free competition of independent individual entrepreneurs, to monopoly capitalism, in which the changed relations of production (and especially the large 'units' such as cartels and trusts) require a strong state mobilizing all means of power... The turn from the liberalist to the total-authoritarian state occurs within the framework of a single social order. With regard to the unity of this economic base, we can say it is liberalism that 'produces' the total-authoritarian state out of itself, as its own consummation at a more advanced stage of development. The total-authoritarian state brings with it the organization and theory of society that correspond to the monopolistic stage of capitalism."[73]

The reciprocal relation between the investigations of Marcuse and Pollock appears also to extend beyond the 1930s when Pollock writes in his book on *Automation*: "...among the most serious social consequences of automation [is] the danger that it strengthens the already existing trend toward a totalitarian society. But such a totalitarian development represents only *one* of the possibilities for society as a whole opened up by the new mode of production. It also shows, indeed for the first time in human history, a way toward the abolition of poverty and the oppressive labor that stunts men and this, not simply for the most developed countries, but in a not so distant future, for the entire earth. These are perspectives which appear utopian in the face of the tensions and struggles springing from the most bitter want of the greatest part of people living today, and yet would be realizable if a more rational use were made of the possibilities given today."[74] The gap between theoretical formulation and practical critique has become very great here: the refusal of the system is similar to the peculiar ethical reasoning in Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man*; it derives from a position outside "existing" reality out of which no *immanent* critique is possible.

More interesting—but also correspondingly more difficult—is the relationship between Pollock and Adorno. On the one hand, Adorno always kept Grossmann in mind as the more profound and versatile of the economic theorists who worked on the basis of Marxian categories; on the other hand, he took over Pollock's characterization of authoritarian socialization as it was being brought about by the oligo- and monopolistic developments of contemporary capitalism. Viewed abstractly and theoretically, the dialectic between the forces and relations of production remains the fundamental principle for explaining capitalist society. As Pollock had shown in his essay on the economic crisis of 1933, however, this dialectic appears to be suspended

73. *Negations*, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (Boston, 1969), pp. 18-19. In the essay written with Mandelbaum, Pollock refers to the important piece by Marcuse (*op.cit.*, p. 402).

74. Pollock, *Automation, op.cit.*, pp. 247-248.

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because it admits a kind of "adjustment process" which, if it does not disprove the Marxian law of the tendential fall in the rate of profit, at least removes the concrete timeliness upon whose foundation this law's validity must rest. In the introduction to *Der Positivismusstreit in der deutschen Soziologie* (*The Positivism Controversy in German Sociology*), Adorno explains unmistakably that the theory of collapse represents even today one of the most important questions of the social sciences.[75] He makes similar remarks with respect to value theory.[76] The Marxian laws appear, however, to have strangely lost their object and with it the medium of their practical verification. With the "freezing" of the real dialectic, critical thought appears to be damned to the exile of contemplation for an unforeseeable future. Even as Adorno's theory holds to Marxian orthodoxy, it still cannot allow it to become effective in the new form of the capitalist organization of domination. It becomes the negative totality, the reflex of the "absence of historical movement" (*Stillstands der historischen Bewegung*) of that objective process which Grossmann had outlined in his rigorous interpretation and which appears to be blocked by a series of counter tendencies: "Through the absolute rule of negation and in accordance with the pattern of immanent antithesis, the movement of thought, as of history, becomes unambiguously, exclusively, implacably positive. Everything is subsumed under the main economic phases and their development. . ."[77]

The "mocking" realization of mankind as species-being in the planned economy has removed the practical-critical instance from revolutionary humanism's own object: "Self-preservation in the shape of class has kept everyone at the stage of a mere species being."[78] One finds a similar description of this phenomenon in those pages of Pollock's automation book where he speaks of the paramilitary organization of modern manufacturing and describes this as the cellular form of the "despotism" of society as a whole. The process of the socialization of labor completes itself in a distorted form: this is expressed in the respective absolutization of both moments of the process—in an abstract rationalization in which variable capital is treated as constant capital and the worker as a machine, and in an increase in the historical power of despotism in the factory.[79]

75. T.W. Adorno, ed., *Der Positivismusstreit in der deutschen Soziologie* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1969), p. 53.

76. In *Sociologica*, II (Frankfurt am Main, 1962), p. 117. Cf. here as well the important essay by H.G. Backhaus, "Zur Dialektik der Wertform," in Alfred Schmidt, ed., *Beiträge zur marxistischen Erkenntnistheorie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1970), p. 144.

77. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (London, 1974), pp. 150-151.

78. M. Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York, 1972), p. 155.

79. Cf. Pollock, *Automation, op.cit.*, pp. 249ff. The sole comparison between the analyses of Pollock and that of Adorno which I have found until now is in Raniero Panzieri, "Relazione sul neocapitalismo" (1961) in *La ripresa del marxismo-leninismo in Italia* (Milano, 1972), pp. 184 and 195. Cf. the important essay "Mehrwert und Planung" in Claudio Pozzoli, ed., *Spätkapitalismus und Klassenkampf. Eine Auswahl aus den Quaderni Rossi* (Frankfurt am Main, 1972), pp. 56ff.

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Such parallels between an economist such as Pollock and a philosopher like Adorno can only astonish those who are not familiar with the real problematic (or even with the texts) of critical Marxism. From the very beginning it has tried to interpret the dynamic of the modern production process by recourse to the Marxian analysis of commodities: "We are concerned above all with the *principle* at work here: the principle of rationalization based on what is and *can be calculated*... Rationalization in the sense of being able to predict with ever greater precision all the results to be achieved is only to be acquired by the exact breakdown of every complex into its elements and by the study of the special laws governing production... This destroys the organic necessity with which inter-related special operations are unified in the end-product. The unity of a product as a *commodity* no longer coincides with its unity as a use-value; as society becomes more radically capitalistic the increasing technical autonomy of the special operations involved in production is expressed also, as an economic autonomy, as the growing relativization of the commodity character of a product at the various stages of production."[80]

The mechanical fragmentation of the production process also shatters those ties which united individual subjects of work into a community of "organic" production. Mechanized production transforms these subjects into abstract, isolated atoms whose association is increasingly mediated by the abstract laws of the mechanism of society as a whole. In the system of social labor, time loses its qualitative character, its mutability, in congealing as a quantitatively measureable continuum which is correspondingly filled with measureable "things" (the alienated operations of workers). The quantifying abstraction of work—the subsumption of the production process under the concept of calculability—is in the society of planned capitalism the *concretion* of the abstract presupposition which is implicit in exchange relations: "Bourgeois society is universally subject to the law of exchange, to the 'like for like' computations which leave no remainder. Exchange is in its very essence something timeless, as *ratio* itself—as the operations of mathematics exclude the moment of time by virtue of their pure form. In the same way concrete time...disappears from industrial production. This... scarcely requires accumulated experience any more."[81]

Such an abstraction of the production process and of the internal organization of the industrial enterprise would be impossible "were it not for the fact that it contained in concentrated form the whole structure of capitalist society."[82] The sphere within which "rational calculation" is effective is not

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80. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness, op.cit.*, pp. 88-89.

81. T.W. Adorno, "Was bedeutet Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit?" in *Erziehung zur Mündigkeit. Vorträge und Gespräche mit Helmut Becker 1959-1969*, ed. Gerd Kadelbach (Frankfurt am Main, 1970), pp. 13ff.

82. Lukács, *op.cit.*, p. 90; cf. Pollock, "State Capitalism," *op.cit.*, *passim*, and *Automation*, *op.cit.*, p. 291.

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only subjected to strict laws, but also presupposes the absolute lawfulness of all events; i.e., this means the satisfaction of social needs is completely realized in the form of commodity exchange. The atomization of individuals is therefore only the mirroring of the fact that the "natural laws" of capitalist production have seized all the life forms of the society on the level of consciousness. For the first time in history all of society has been subjected to a unitary and uniform economic process which controls and decides on the activities and fate of all of its members. The commodity structure of "things" and the lawfulness of their relations lends to social relations the character of an innate naturalness which appears to the individual consciousness as an insurmountable fact: "The thesis that society is subject to natural laws is ideology if it is hypostatized as immutably given by nature. But these natural laws are real as the laws of motion of the unconscious society..."[83]

This natural lawfulness has a specific repercussion in the theoretical dimension: what the philosophers once termed "Life"—the leitmotif of *Minima Moralia*—has been reduced to the sphere of the private, of mere *consumption*, which at the same time is the appendage and estranged form of the material production process: "The change in the relations of production themselves depends largely on what takes place in the 'sphere of consumption,' the mere reflection of production and the caricature of true life: in the consciousness and unconsciousness of individuals. Only by virtue of opposition to production, as still not wholly encompassed by this order, can men bring about another more worthy of human beings."[84] Nevertheless, Adorno appears here to have forgotten the point of departure; his attention is directed toward the *socialized* form of reification and of exchange, to the disadvantage of what is in reality the focal point of this socializing process of labor: the modern factory. In clearly distancing himself from Lukács, from whom he had started, he tends to reduce the analysis of the modern capitalist enterprise, which is based on the processes of automation and of the parcellization of production activity, to a purely micro-sociological problem, instead of seeing the enterprise as the cellular form of the whole capitalist relation. As a consequence he can pose himself the "grimly comic" question: where is the proletariat? This reduction cannot be explained simply by recourse to historical causes which are doubtless important.[85] The failure of revolution, the crisis of 1929, fascism and the development of the Soviet Union can perhaps explain some of the characteristic features of Adorno's thought: the tacit adherence to the fundamental categories of Marxian analysis (which were suspended by the checkmating of the objective historical movement, i.e., the tendency toward crisis and to the collapse of the system),

83. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E.B. Ashton (New York, 1973), pp. 355-356. Translation slightly altered—ed.

84. *Minima Moralia, op.cit.*, p. 15.

85. The most thorough analysis in this sense appears in H.J. Krahl, "The Political Contradictions in Adorno's Critical Theory," *Telos*, No. 21 (Fall, 1974), pp. 164-167.

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the de-materialization of concepts, and the evaporation of history in *Negative Dialectics*, where the conception of history moves close to the empty categories of Heidegger. Historical factors do not explain, however, how the checkmating of the historical movement is expressed in Adorno's theory by an unavoidable absence of the connecting link which must unite with praxis; they do not explain how this absence becomes a *theory-immanent* fact which points to the inadequacy of the critical appropriation of the real, antagonistic totality. In order to move beyond Critical Theory, it is necessary to proceed in accordance with the critique of ideology and to grasp the weakness of the link with praxis as the immanent limit of the theory itself. If one tries, however, to escape from the limbo of completely general expressions in order to see how this limit is actually constituted, then one finds that it is not simply a matter of peculiarity of the thought of Adorno and Horkheimer, but goes back even further to the beginnings of "critical Marxism," to Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*. It derives from the dialectical relationship between the abstract (quantitative) rationality of "what remains" (of capitalist domination) and the bursting forth of the qualitative dimension. As is well known, Lukács solves the problem through a re-translation of the relationship into a dialectic of the consciousness of an absolute subject-object (the proletariat) which then becomes the guarantee of historical development and of the inevitability of revolution. Critical Theory decisively rejects this idealistic and Hegelianizing interpretation of Marxism and confronts it with the *contingent character of the materialist dialectic*,[86] without being able to point to a positive solution.

The question is still far from being solved—even with the most recent Marxist interpretations which have often turned out to be satisfied with a "scientistic" reduction of the concept of praxis by which the problematic of class consciousness is completely eliminated. As a consequence, the basic problem of Critical Theory—the relationship between the blocking, the self-structuration of the historical process (which Alfred Schmidt describes as the "freezing of historical movement"), and the bursting forth of the qualitative dimension—is still *our* problem today. The simple reference to the *form* of the dialectic not only offers no solution, but obscures the difficulties inherent in this relationship upon which the entire problematic of revolutionary subjectivity is suspended. Nor can the conflict be solved by a confrontation of the "immediate needs" of human "essence" and its capitalist "plundering." The Marxian analysis of commodity fetishism does not have as its outcome the "rediscovery" of "estranged human subjectivity"[87] under fetishistic

86. With his empiricist interpretation of this contingency J. Habermas has begun a clear revision of Marxian value theory and thus broken through Adorno's static orthodoxy (cf. "Zur philosophischen Diskussion um Marx und den Marxismus," in *Theorie und Praxis* [Neuwied and Berlin, 1963], p. 322).

87. Thus, Colletti renews repeatedly—without really knowing it—the *really weak point* of Lukács' analysis of alienation. Cf. *From Rousseau to Lenin*, trans. John Merrington and Judith White (London, 1972), p. 89.

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objectivity, but rather the unveiling of the fact that behind commodity exchange are hidden determinate *relations of production.* One must therefore depart from the *determinate* process of the capitalist socialization of labor in order to correctly pose the question of class consciousness, which is itself inseparable from the given material level of class *composition.*

As noted, the problem is still far from being solved, but—and this is important—its solution cannot remain purely "philosophical" (just as little as it can be exhausted in a critical-philological restoration of texts). Nor can the solution be given by the—often appealed to—supersession of the disciplinary boundaries which isolate economics and philosophy. It cannot be a matter of translating both fields reciprocally into one another (with that one would not succeed in getting much beyond traditional "syncretism"), but one of the transcendence of both from the perspective of the critique of ideology.

The condition for the return of theory to historical praxis consists in allowing theory's own categories to become effective, i.e., subsuming theory itself under the new material created by the real totality, and thereby recovering analytical capacity. This presupposes, however, *the reappropriation of the critique of political economy,* the sole means—following the Marxian turn—to "ascend" from the abstract to the concrete.

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# *Wittfogel's Science of Society**

by G.L. Ulmen

*1. An Introduction to the Man and his Work*

Karl August Wittfogel is the most controversial writer on Asia in the twentieth century and one of the most controversial figures in the history of Marxism and the Communist Movement. His journey from a Marxist and Communist in good standing in the 1920s to a "heretic" in 1931 with the publication of his book, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*, to a "renegade of Marxism" and opponent of the Communist movement, most notably in his 1957 book, *Oriental Despotism*, is one of the most extraordinary intellectual and political developments of a major thinker in recent times. Already in the tumultous years of the Weimar Republic, Wittfogel was an intellectual and political storm center and he has remained so until the present. However one views Wittfogel's development, its significance in the history of Marxism and in the history of social thought past and present cannot be doubted. The so-called "Great Debate" on Marx's concept of the "Asiatic mode of production" that began in the spring of 1962 in France had the express purpose of "taking back (*reprendre*)" the concept from Wittfogel. The debate spread to the Soviet Union, Germany, Italy, China, Japan, England and other countries where Marxism has a role in the intellectual and-or political life, and it continues to find its reference point in the "disquieting work of Wittfogel on Oriental despotism."[1] In searching for its intellectual origins, the German New Left has in the past few years published pirated editions of all of the Weimar Wittfogel books and many of his theoretical articles.[2]

To be sure, the intellectual and political career of the Weimar Wittfogel is compelling; but it is often, and mistakenly, treated by the Left in isolation, as somehow unconnected with the intellectual and political career of the exile Wittfogel and the American Wittfogel. A closer examination of the totality of Wittfogel's life and work reveals quite the opposite—that there is an inherent unity in Wittfogel's development from the Weimar Republic to the present.

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* This sketch of Wittfogel's development and what follows are based on the author's forthcoming book, *The Science of Society: Toward an Understanding of the Life and Work of Karl August Wittfogel* (in press: Mouton & Co.). Only the absolutely essential documentation is given here. Full documentation must await the book's publication.

1. Jean Chesneaux, "Recents travaux marxistes sur le mode de production asiatique (Bibliographie sommaire)," *La Pensée* (April, 1964), no. 114, p. 71, and "Ou en est la discussion sur le mode de production asiatique? (II)," *La Pensée* (October, 1966), no. 129. A comprehensive review and discussion of this world-wide debate will soon be available in my forthcoming article, "Marxism and Asia: The Historical and Political Foundations of the Debate on the Asiatic Mode of production."

2. For a partial list of these publications, cf. Albrecht Götz von Glenhusen and Christa Gnirss, *Handbuch der Raubdrucke 2, Theorie und Klassenkampf* (Pullach bei München, 1973).

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In the beginning, his intellectual endeavors followed the logic of his political position. But once he found the center of his interest in Asia, his political position followed the logic of his intellectual endeavors. Specifically, Wittfogel sought in Asia an institutional pattern comparable to the West's "bourgeois society," as understood by Marx and Weber and in a wider sense by Hegel as "civil society" (*bürgerliche Gesellschaft*). His discovery of Marx's concept of the "Asiatic mode of production" led him to identify such an institutional pattern, which he was to call "Asiatic society," "Oriental society," and later "hydraulic society," and which was associated with the dominant political institution of "Oriental despotism." No more than Marx's and Weber's scientific and political views of the world can be separated from their understanding of Western capitalism and "bourgeois society" can Wittfogel's scientific and political view of the world be separated from his understanding of Oriental despotism and "hydraulic society." Once this is understood, the logic of Wittfogel's development is clear and consistent.

Understandably, in the English-speaking world much more is known about the American Wittfogel—especially since the 1950s—than about the Weimar Wittfogel or the exile Wittfogel. A brief sketch of his development during the earlier two periods will throw light on the historical foundations of his "science of society" and its political consequences not only in Weimar and in exile, but also in America.

Born in Woltersdorf, Germany in 1896, Wittfogel came of age during the declining years of the imperial social structure. He became politicized as a member of the German Youth Movement, which he joined in 1912—one year before the famous Hohe-Meissnertagung that marked the politicization of both the Wandervogel and the Freideutsche Jugend. In large part, this process resulted in right-wing nationalism. In Wittfogel's case, as in others, it resulted in left-wing radicalism. At the outbreak of World War I in August 1914, Wittfogel was a pacifist, a position that soon brought him into contact with various forms of socialism.

In the spring of 1917, Wittfogel was drafted and assigned to garrison work in the signal corps, ultimately in the lower depths of the Headquarters of the General Staff in Berlin. But this did not end his ties to the radical wing of the Youth Movement. In January 1918, together with Paul Vogler, Hermann Bergmann, Alfred Kurella, Karl Bittel and others, he signed the famous "Neujahrsrundbrief" of the Youth Movement. Seemingly mild in tone, this "circular letter" linked the anti-war movement to the on-coming German Revolution. In the following months Wittfogel and other leaders of the Youth Movement published more political circular letters and before the end of the year, one of them, signed by Wittfogel, Rudolf Carnap et al. called upon all Freideutsche to vote socialist. In November 1918, Wittfogel joined the Independent Social Democratic Party (USPD), which early in 1917 had broken with the Social Democratic Party (SPD). The Independents were opposed to the war and were sympathetic to the Bolshevik Revolution, but,

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unlike the Spartacists led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, they did not advocate the application of Bolshevik methods in Germany. In the fall of 1919, Wittfogel attended the first Socialist Students Congress in Leipzig, at which he was chosen one of three German representatives to the International Socialist Students Congress held soon after in Geneva.

1920 found Wittfogel teaching at the Volkshochschule Schloss Tinz, a labor college that drew its students from the trade unions and its support essentially from the Independent Social Democrats. Karl Korsch, also an Independent Social Democrat and a *Provatdozent* at the University of Jena, visited Tinz early in 1920, and he and Wittfogel became fast friends. At Wittfogel's suggestion Korsch gave a course at Tinz on "factory shop stewards" which laid the basis for his book, *Arbeitsrecht für Betriebsräte*. In the fall of 1920 in Halle, the Independent Social Democrats split and the left wing, to which Wittfogel and Korsch belonged, merged with the German Communist Party. Already in their discussions at Tinz, Wittfogel and Korsch had found themselves closer to the Communists than to the Independents. At Tinz, Wittfogel's lectures had become increasingly Marxist; not long after joining the Communists he resigned his position.

Wittfogel embarked on his intellectual and political career as a Communist playwright. Both as a *gymnasiast* and as a young student he had written plays, one of which was performed by the Youth Movement. But in 1921, the Malik Verlag published Wittfogel's *Rote Soldaten* and thereafter other of his plays and some of his books, as well as works by Franz Jung, George Grosz and Georg Lukács' *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*. *Rote Soldaten* was only one of several of Wittfogel's plays produced in Germany by Erwin Piscator. Some were translated and produced in Moscow, Tokyo and New York. But if Wittfogel was not to become one of Weimar Germany's great playwrights, he was to become one of the German Communist Party's leading Marxists and its expert on China and the Far East.

Wittfogel's initial interest in the "East" reflected a general insecurity about the future of Europe and a fascination with Oriental religions and "things Chinese" (greatly stimulated by Richard Wilhelm's translations of the Chinese classics) that pervaded Germany toward the end of the war and thereafter. During the first two years of the war, in the universities of Leipzig, Munich and Berlin, Wittfogel studied the history of philosophy under Wilhelm Wundt, German history under Karl Lamprecht (who, being influenced by Marx, made a considerable impression on Wittfogel), Gestalt psychology under one of its founders, Max Wertheimer, philosophy under Georg Lasson, the editor of Hegel's collected works, and sociology under Alfred Vierkandt. At the University of Rostock in 1916, he studied geology and geography. It was there that he met the economic historian, Richard Ehrenburg, who suggested that Wittfogel should become a social scientist. Ehrenburg was particularly impressed with Wittfogel's extra-curricular reading, and it must be said that he was probably influenced more by his own omnivorous

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intellectual adventures outside the classroom than in the formal pursuit of his university studies. Already in 1917, he gave lectures on the world religions, and particularly the religions of the "East." In the spring of 1919, he delivered six public lectures on China at the Neue Sezession gallery in Gerlin, basing himself strongly on Richard Wilhelm's translations and anthropological insights gleaned from the writings of the Sinologist, A. Conrady.

In 1921, Wittfogel began his formal Sinological training in Leipzig under A. Conrady and Eduard Erkes. The direction of his life's work was indicated, but his interests were still too wide to be channeled. In particular, he had not yet found a way to bring together his interests in Marxism and China. Between 1922 and 1925, he continued to write plays, and he published numerous articles and books on the Marxist critique of bourgeois science and society. His last and most successful play, *Wer ist der Dümmste?*, is set in Saxony, Africa and China. His last book on bourgeois society, *Geschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft,* contains Wittfogel's first mention of Marx's concept of the "Asiatic mode of production."

But as Wittfogel was finding himself scientifically, he ran into political trouble. Oddly enough, he was criticized by the KPD because the serial he was writing for Willi Münzenberg's *Proletarische Jugendschriften* was built around a peasant rebellion—not around a worker's rebellion. And soon the differences between the German Party, the Russian Party and the Comintern caught up with him. Uncertain of his political and intellectual future, he accepted a position as cultural editor of the *Rote Fahne.* In the five months that he held this position, he wrote many articles and quickly became the paper's leading literary critic.

The defeat of the "German October" in 1923—which for Lenin and the Soviets spelled the defeat of the hoped-for "Western Revolution"—had serious repercussions in the power struggle that followed the death of Lenin in 1924. By 1925, the "bolshevization" of all parties became the order of the day. In February 1925 Stalin began his attack on the KPD and in April the Agitprop section of the Comintern sent an open letter to its central committee criticizing its three most independent thinkers—Karl Korsch, Georg Lukács and Karl August Wittfogel.[3]

By far the most important change in 1925, and the one that was decisive for Wittfogel's development, was the change in the revolutionary direction of world communism. Realizing that capitalism had been "stabilized" in the West, Stalin and the other Soviet leaders turned to the "colonial question." The antagonism between the metropolitan centers of capitalism and "backward countries," the "contradiction between the world city...and the world village" now assumed primary importance in the world revolution. This meant that the main revolutionary thrust of the Communist movement would

3. "On the Periodical Die International (C.P. Germany)," *International Press Correspondence,* English edition, vol. 5, no. 29 (April 9, 1925), p. 387.

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now be in Asia, and particularly in China. In July 1925, in an interview "On the Revolutionary Movement in the East," Stalin affirmed this policy shift: "You ask me whether I am not of the opinion that the intensification of the revolutionary movement in China, India, Persia, Egypt and other Eastern countries is a sign that the time is near when the Western powers will lie down in the grave they have dug for themselves in the East. Yes, I believe it. Revolutionizing the East will give a decisive impulse to the intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the West."[4]

In the summer of 1925, in a small room of the recently founded Institut für Sozialforschung and with access to its research facilities, Wittfogel wrote his first Marxist survey of China, *Das erwachende China*. At the outset he stated: "The summer of 1925, in which the first meaningful large-scale action by the Chinese people was launched against the foreign imperialists, marks a turning point in the history of East Asia, both nationally and internationally. Indeed, 1925 is the beginning of China's real awakening...one glance at the Communist press for the summer months of 1925 shows how the organizations of the Comintern, both national and international, have with all their power, appeals, rallies and collections, given themselves to the service of China."[5] This was also the turning point for Wittfogel, and one that in the years following caused him to participate and lead in the awakening of Marxist consciousness to the nature of Asia and to participate and lead in the vigorous emergence of Asia in twentieth century social thought. Wittfogel was concerned not only with Asia's economic and social history, but also with the meaning of its historical reality. In his many articles and books written between 1925 and 1931 he already indicated that the very conditions which had led so many scholars to view Asia as "unhistorical" were in fact the keys to its history and that, with the awakening of Asia, the understanding of its peculiar nature was of primary importance both for the understanding of world history and the future of mankind.

In 1925, Wittfogel was not the only "committed" scholar, but the only known Communist scholar associated with the Institut für Sozialforschung. Wittfogel's friendship with Felix Weil, the founder of the Institut, began in the summer of 1922 in Berlin. Early in 1923, Weil invited Wittfogel and his wife, Rose Schlessinger, whom he had married in 1921, to come to Frankfurt to discuss their possible association with the Institut, which was still in the planning stage.[6] In Frankfurt, Weil introduced them to Friedrich Pollock and drove them out to the home of Kurt Albert Gerlach. Originally, Weil had wanted his teacher, Karl Korsch, to be the head of the Institut, but early in

4. *International Press Correspondence*, English edition, vol. 5, no. 59 (July 23, 1925), p. 810.

5. Karl August Wittfogel, *Das erwachende China. Ein Abriss der Geschichte der gegenwärtigen Probleme Chinas* (Vienna, 1926), pp. 5f.

6. Wittfogel met his second wife, Olga Joffe, a Russian journalist and a correspondent for the Soviet Trade Union newspaper, *Trud*, in 1929. They were divorced in 1939 and he married his present wife, the American anthropologist, Esther S. Goldfrank, in 1940.

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1922 Gerlach, who had been a professor of economics in Kiel and at the Technische Hochschule in Aachen, was offered the position. Already in Kiel, and later also in Aachen, Gerlach had exhibited left-wing tendencies and had organized study groups on socialist and Communist doctrine. When he and Wittfogel met, he had joined the faculty of Economics and Social Science at the University of Frankfurt. It was Gerlach and his assistant, Richard Sorge, who, together with Pollock, programmed the Institut. Weil, through the newly established Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung, was involved in negotiating the Institut's relations to the City and University of Frankfurt. Also in 1922, Gerlach wrote a memorandum outlining the aims of the Institut and gave lectures on anarchism, Marxism and socialism.[7]

At their first meeting, Gerlach invited Wittfogel's wife, because of her past experience, to become the Institut's head librarian. Gerlach's conception of the Institut's task struck a sympathetic chord in Wittfogel, but previous commitments kept him elsewhere. However, during 1923 and 1924, he made frequent trips to Frankfurt to be with his wife, who was sharing working-quarters with Sorge in the basement of the Senkenberg Museum, the temporary home of the Institut's library. In 1925, Wittfogel became officially associated with the Institut.

Gerlach died in the summer of 1923. In May 1924 Carl Grünberg, the prominent economic historian and Professor of Social Science at the University of Vienna, became the Institut's director and this was decisive for Wittfogel. At the urging of Grünberg, who became Wittfogel's fatherly friend and teacher, he resumed his studies for a Ph.D. degree at the University of Frankfurt, whose faculty of Economics and Social Sciences was also headed by "Papa" Grünberg. In his *Festrede* at the official opening of the Institut on June 22, 1924, Grünberg stressed that on the intellectual level (i.e., not on the political level) the Institut would reflect the "period of transition" Germany and the world were then experiencing.[8] He described himself as an "adherent of Marxism" and stated that the "research method of Marxism" would determine the Institut's "scientific task."[9] For both Grünberg and his favorite student, Wittfogel, the essence of Marxism was "the materialist conception of history" which they understood as "a theory of organic development." The social, political and spiritual processes of life were to be "defined by the mode of production of material life."[10]

Early in 1928, when Wittfogel was to take his doctoral examinations, Grünberg suffered a stroke and Wittfogel completed his work under Wilhelm Gerloff and Richard Wilhelm. Pollock served as interim director of the

7. Kurt Albert Gerlach, *Institut für Sozialforschung an der Universität Frankfurt am Main* (Frankfurt, 1925).

8. Carl Grünberg, *Festrede gehalten zur Einweihung des Instituts für Sozialforschung an der Universität Frankfurt a.M. am 22 June-1924* (Frankfurt am Main, 1924), p. 7.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

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Institut and it was during his term of office that the philosopher Max Horkheimer began to assume a leading role, but in 1928 Horkheimer was still the assistant of Hans Cornelius. Three years later, Horkheimer, now professor of social philosophy at the University of Frankfurt, became the Institut's director. Now "social philosophy" replaced "social science."

In his acceptance speech, delivered on January 24, 1931, Horkheimer stated that "social philosophy stands at the center of philosophical interest" and "the international endeavors of the present time."[11] In the history of German idealism, social philosophy was "the decisive philosophical task." Horkheimer's major concern was with those parts of Hegel's system in which "idealism became social philosophy."[12] Thus the task that the aging Grünberg and the young Wittfogel had set for themselves and the Institut was brushed aside. The philosophical approach was ranked above "the approach of empirical thinkers."[13] In fact, social philosophy assumed a polemical stance *vis-à-vis* the "positivistic" approach of Grünberg and Wittfogel. The duty of philosophy, in Horkheimer's words, was to "transfigure reality."[14] From this time on, although Wittfogel was one of the "core members" of the Institut during the last two years of the Weimar Republic and during the years of exile, he remained an outsider both in terms of the Institut's major task and among its later members, who became known as the "Frankfurt School" long after the Institut had been moved from Frankfurt.

Even during the Institut's Grünberg years Wittfogel's activities were much broader than those of his fellow members. He contributed articles to such journals as *Die Internationale, Inprekorr, Die Weltbühne, Der Rote Aufbau, Unter dem Banner des Marxismus,* and the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik.* In Moscow in 1928 he participated in informal discussions on China with Ludwig Madyar, S.M. Dubrovskii and Eugene Varga. David Riazanov, the director of the Marx-Engels Institut (which was publishing the *Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe:* MEGA in cooperation with the Institut für Sozialforschung) drew his attention to Marx's unpublished writings on the "Asiatic mode of production" and invited him to write for the *Marx-Engels Archiv.*

In 1929 Wittfogel again took up residence in Berlin and established close relations with the cultural and intellectual life of the capital. Having joined the Schutzverband Deutscher Schriftsteller (SDS) in 1925, he now became a member of its Board. He was also a member of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kommunistischen Schriftsteller (AKS) which in October 1928 was incorporated in the Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller (BPRS), whose membership included Georg Lukács, Johannes Becher and Ludwig

11. Max Horkheimer, "Die gegenwärtigen Lage der Sozialphilosophie und die Aufgabe eines Instituts für Sozialforschung," *Frankfurter Universitätsreden,* vol. XXXVII (Frankfurt am Main, 1931), p. 3.
12. *Ibid.,* p. 4.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 6.
14. *Ibid.,* pp. 8-9.

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Renn. Together with Lukács, Ernst Jünger and Friedrich Hielscher, Wittfogel also participated in the Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Planwirtschaft and lectured before the Marxistische Arbeiterschulung (MASCH).

Wittfogel was on the editorial board of the BPRS's first journal, *Die Front*, but he contributed few articles to it since he was still residing in Frankfurt. However, when the BPRS's most important journal, *Die Linkskurve,* came into being in August 1929, Wittfogel was not only an active member of its editorial board but one of its two leading theoreticians. Lukács was the other. Wittfogel first met Lukács in the spring of 1923 at the so-called Erste Marxistische Arbeitswoche at which the still unpublished manuscripts of Korsch's *Marxismus und Philosophie* and Lukács' *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* were discussed.[15] While their approaches to Marxism were very different, Lukács and Wittfogel became friends and remained so until the end of the Weimar Republic.

In the latter half of 1930, Wittfogel contributed a series of articles on Marxist aesthetics to the *Linkskurve* as part of the debate on "proletarian literature." His articles were expected to end the debate, but instead they laid the foundation for a Marxist aesthetics which Lukács soon after developed in his *Linkskurve* articles and later writings. Recent studies by the German New Left have pointed out that Wittfogel's articles were "the earliest...to extrapolate the aesthetic from the theoretical totality of historical materialism" and that his formulations concerning the materialist-dialectical interpretation of art both as starting-point and problem had a decisive influence on Lukács.[16]

Wittfogel had criticized Bertolt Brecht in the mid-1920s for his "lumpen-proletarian" ideology, but on December 13, 1930, at the opening night of Brecht's most controversial play, *Die Massnahme,* Wittfogel sat beside him. In the now famous "*Massnahme* discussion," held in a local school hall, Wittfogel chaired the meeting, and Brecht was seated on the platform. The discussion concentrated on the killing of a comrade for disobeying the directives of the Party. The Communists argued that the "Communist way" was expulsion from the Party, but Wittfogel, in support of Brecht, argued that "physical death for the comrade (or better: for every political man) was not as tragic as expulsion."[17] Brecht and Wittfogel continued to meet until the end of the Weimar Republic. Brecht attended Wittfogel's MASCH lectures and Wittfogel participated in the preparatory discussions of the Brecht-Eisler-Dudow film, "Kuhle Wampe."

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15. The fullest account of this meeting is in Paul Breines, "Praxis and its Theorists: The Impact of Lukács and Korsch in the 1920s," *Telos*, no. 11 (Spring, 1972), pp. 67-103.

16. Cf. Peter Gorsen and Heiner Boehncke, "Zu Wittfogel: Zur einer Frage einer marxistischen Aesthetik," *Aesthetik und Kommunikation*, vol. 1, no. 2 (December, 1970), p. 64; and Helga Gallas, *Marxistische Literaturtheorie. Kontroversen im Bund proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1971).

17. Karl Thieme, "Des Teufels Gebetbuch? Eine Auseinandersetzung mit dem Werke Bertolt Brechts," *Hochland*, vol. 29, no. 5 (1931-1932), p. 412.

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1931 marked the one-hundredth anniversary of Hegel's death and Wittfogel wrote the commemorative articles for *Inprekorr, Linkskurve* and other Communist publications. Together with Lukács, and other Communist scholars, he prepared a Hegel volume refuting the official Hegel Congress at the University of Berlin directed by Hermann Glockner. Glockner's keynote for the Congress: "The question of Hegel in Germany is first of all a question of Kant." Both Wittfogel and Lukács, who attended the Congress together, disagreed with this neo-Kantian orientation. Korsch was also at the Congress, but both Wittfogel and Lukács had become estranged from him after his turn against the Soviet Union in 1926. Wittfogel and Lukács were also the main speakers at the Hegel celebration organized by MASCH. When the Hegel memorial Congress in Moscow was convened in November 1931, the KPD sent Wittfogel because Lukács was in disfavor. But just as Lukács was not invited to the Hegel Congress in Moscow, so Wittfogel was not invited to the "discussion on the Asiatic mode of production" held in 1931 in Leningrad which condemned the concept and Wittfogel's use of it in his book, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* (a Russian translation was circulated, but never published).

Wittfogel's problems with Moscow were not only theoretical; they were also political. He opposed Stalin's German policy. The official Communist line emanating from Moscow held that Social Democracy was "Social Fascism" and thus the greater danger. In the spring of 1931, Wittfogel put aside his scientific work and devoted his writing and speaking talents to the fight against "real" Fascism. Already in the early 1920s, Wittfogel began writing articles attacking Mussolini and Italian Fascism. Now he concentrated on the fight against both Italian Fascism and German Nazism because he considered them part of a single world movement. When the Institut für Sozialforschung offered him the opportunity to go to China in 1931 to do research for the second volume of his study of Chinese economy and society, Wittfogel refused to leave Germany. The Institut continued to support him financially, but it is of interest that Wittfogel was the only member of the Frankfurt Institut to abandon his scientific work and engage actively in the fight against Hitler. Most of Wittfogel's articles from 1931-1933 attacking Fascism, Nazism, anti-semitism and Hitler appeared in Münzenberg's *Rote Aufbau*. One looks in vain for any articles dealing with Fascism or Nazism in the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* prior to or after Hitler's rise to power. In fact, only in 1938 in New York did the other members of the Institut begin to analyze the problem of anti-Semitism.

Wittfogel was arrested shortly after Hitler became Chancellor on January 30, 1933 and he spent the next several months in prisons and concentration camps. He was released at the end of the year, perhaps due to the protests and appeals to Hitler by such figures as Sidney Webb, Harold Laski and R.H. Tawney. In January 1934 and in failing health, he left Germany for England, where he recuperated and wrote (under the pseudonym, Klaus Hinrichs) one

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of the first concentration camp novels, *Staatliches Konzentrationslager VII.* It was only after he joined the other members of the Institut at Columbia University in New York in September 1934 that he turned back to his scientific work, which, after two years spent in China under the auspices of the Institut für Sozialforschung and the Institute of Pacific Relations, culminated in 1938 in the publication of his article, "The Theory of Oriental Society."[18]

In the summer of 1939, Wittfogel founded the Chinese History Project, with funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, to coordinate and publish the results of his researches in China. But with the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August and Wittfogel's break with the Communist movement, the political and intellectual unity of the Project began to crumble.[19] Like Grünberg's conception of the Institut für Sozialforschung, Wittfogel's conception of the Chinese History Project was based on a unity of method of research and Weltanschauung. In this sense, his Project was doomed almost from the start because several of its members, and particularly his Chinese associates (all of whom ultimately returned home after the victory of the Chinese Communists in 1949), were and remained sympathetic to Communism. The only volume of the Chinese History Project completed under Wittfogel's direction was *The History of Chinese Society, Liao.*[20]

As the political alienation bewteen Wittfogel and his staff increasingly undermined their scientific cooperation, Wittfogel turned his attention to completing the long-planned second volume of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas,* which finally emerged as *Oriental Despotism.* He wrote three drafts in 1940-41, two more in 1946 and in 1947 he began another. This draft he laid aside because he had made a discovery that fundamentally altered his political perspective and changed the character of the book he was writing. In a very real sense, the Wittfogel that is known today and the book that so epitomizes his intellectual and political configuration, *Oriental Despotism,* were born in 1947, for this was the year he first became aware of "Asiatic" Russia.

Up until this time, Wittfogel had considered Russia part of the West. Although he considered the Soviet Union the result of a degenerate revolution, he still thought it exhibited elements of socialism not found elsewhere. Thus between 1939 and 1947, he remained, although not

18. Karl A. Wittfogel, "Die Theorie der orientalischen Gesellschaft," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung,* nos. 1-2 (1938).

19. It should be noted that Wittfogel's disenchantment with the Soviet Union and with Communism began with his opposition to Stalin's German policy and was enforced on his last visit to the "motherland of socialism" in 1932, when he became aware of the terrible impact of Stalin's collectivization policy on the peasantry. His intense hatred of Stalin grew in China when he became aware of the purges which destroyed many former Russian friends and colleagues whom he knew to be loyal Communists. The Nazi-Soviet Pact was the final blow.

20. Completed in 1943, this enormous volume was not published until six years later: Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao* (New York, 1949).

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officially, a kind of Trotskyist. But in 1947, when he read the Plekhanov-Lenin debates at the Stockholm Congress about Russia's "Asiatic" heritage and the danger that a degenerating Bolshevik revolution might lead to a "restoration" of Russia's "old, semi-Asiatic order," Wittfogel turned against the Communist movement with the same combination of intellect and passion that had made him so compelling a revolutionary in the 1920s and 1930s.

Laying aside the latest draft of his book, Wittfogel immersed himself in a new study of the founding fathers of Marxism and the Bolshevik Revolution and, during the next two years, he wrote a 1200 page manuscript on "Asiatic Russia" and the "Asiatic restoration." Having left the Communist movement in 1939, he himself had lost that unity of research and Weltanschauung so necessary to his life and work. Now he had found it again. The first public formulation of his new position was given in the spring of 1950 in his speech at the Second National Conference on the Study of World Areas, published soon after under the title "Russia and Asia."[21] Unfortunately for Wittfogel, this was also the year of the rise of the American demagogue, Senator Joseph McCarthy. As a member of the recently founded Committee for Cultural Freedom, Wittfogel was both anti-Communist and anti-McCarthy, but this did not save him from mistakenly being branded a "McCarthyite," even though he never appeared before one of McCarthy's committees. To this day Wittfogel's conceptual-political change is associated with his one day testimony before the McCarran Committee to investigate the Institute of Pacific Relations for its alleged complicity in the failure of American China policy to prevent the Communist takeover in 1949. Although the McCarran Hearings were looked upon favorably by such outspoken liberal opponents of McCarthy as Norman Thomas and Reinhold Niebuhr, Wittfogel refused to testify at first in closed session and then in open session until he was subpoenaed to appear in August 7, 1951. He was denied permission to read a statement of principle at the beginning of his testimony indicating that he was testifying reluctantly, but he included this unsolicited reprimand against "witch-hunting" at the end of his remarks. McCarthy, who was present as an unofficial observer, as any Senator had a right to be, was nettled and left the room. He got Wittfogel's message, but few others did. What Wittfogel had said during his interrogation greatly damaged his reputation among intellectuals and almost destroyed his career.

But the power of Wittfogel's personality and the power of his ideas proved stronger than the myth of his "McCarthyism." Thrown back upon himself, isolated and virtually alone (for intellectually and politically he fit neither on the Left nor on the Right), Wittfogel sat down to write the final draft of *Oriental Despotism*—that book praised by some as the greatest contribution

21. *World Politics*, vol. 2, no. 4 (July).

22. *Institute of Pacific Relations, Hearings Before the Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws of the Committee of the Judiciary, United States Senate*, first session (1951), part 1, p. 341.

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to the social sciences since Max Weber's *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* and damned by others as a menace. At first he planned to publish his study of "Russia's Asiatic Restoration" separately, but eventually he incorporated its ideas into his *Oriental Despotism* manuscript, thus changing its character and giving it the final form that would make him the most notorious "renegade of Marxism."[23]

When Wittfogel planned the second volume of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*, he did not know where his study would lead. He did not know that after many starts and stops it would move him away from the Communist movement. In 1931, he proudly announced that his socio-historical work received its impulse from the "living present." This was also true when he was writing *Oriental Despotism*. But his perception and understanding of twentieth century upheavals had changed. His apocalyptic perspective in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* contrasts sharply with his apocalyptic perspective in *Oriental Despotism*. The former began with these words: "At the moment that we write. . . the eastern horizon is red with the fiery glow of nationalist and socialist revolutionary movements. The flames spread to nearly all other lands which Marx included in the 'Asiatic' zones: Egypt, India, and above all China. Thus today it is more than 'topical' in the sense of world history that every attempt be made to struggle with unravelling the laws of life of the great 'asiatic' agrarian societies." The latter he ended with the clarion call: "Whither Asia? Whither Western Society—Whither Mankind?"

On the surface, this last seems to reflect a change from optimism to pessimism. But such a judgment is too simple, for Wittfogel has remained an optimistic man. On the surface Wittfogel still seems, in *Oriental Despotism*, to be hoping for the revolution he was hoping for in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*—the revolution, by whatever name, that would signal the overthrow of bureaucratic despotism in those zones of the world Marx designated "Asiatic." Such a judgment is also too simple, for the name of revolution in Asia is still Communism. But contrary to those who emphasize a break between the "good" Wittfogel of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* and the "bad" Wittfogel of *Oriental Despotism*, or the reverse, both of these books, if considered together, evidence a systematic scientific and political development fed by insights gained from his theoretical and empirical investigations of the past and the "living present."

A quarter of a century separated the completion of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas* (in 1930) and the completion of *Oriental Despotism* (in 1955). In the years between, Wittfogel had become familiar and at first-hand with the phenomenon of Stalinism and the phenomenon of Hitlerism, and

23. There are many articles with this claim. Cf. Günter Lewin, "Von der 'asiatischen Produktionsweise' zur 'hydraulic society'. Der Weregang eines Renegaten," *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1967), part 4, pp. 205-258; M.P. Pavlova-Sil'vanskaia, "Zarubezhnye kritiki o knige K. Vitfogelia 'Vostochnyi despotizm'," *Narody Azii i Afriki*, no. 2 (1971), pp. 157-171.

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this gave added depth to his understanding of the phenomenon of "total power" in "Asiatic Society" in China and elsewhere in the Old World and the New World. His discovery of Marx's concept of "Asiatic" Russia and Lenin's concept of an "Asiatic restoration" led him to formulate a morphology of revolution and to recognize basic similarities in bureaucratic structures, past and present. His question "Whither Asia?" is historically and ontologically linked to his question "Whither Western Society—Whither Mankind?" Wittfogel no longer finds the hope of mankind in revolutionary change in Asia, but in ameliorative change in Western society. The revolution he calls for at the end of *Oriental Despotism* is not a specifically political one, although it has definite political implications. It is a revolution in the science of society which is so Europe-centered that it has failed to incorporate insights on the nature of Asia formulated by Marx and other great social analysts. Already in the early 1920s Wittfogel had noted this deficiency in his criticism of "bourgeois science." In a sense his life and work have been dedicated to the development of a macro-economic, macro-social, macro-historical science of society, without, to be sure, neglecting meso- and micro-analytic refinements. One may disagree with the political conclusions Wittfogel draws from his deeper understanding of the "Asiatic zones" of the world, but one cannot ignore the scientific intent and content of his achievement. Wittfogel has given credit to Marx and his predecessors for contributions to the idea of an "Asiatic" or "Oriental" society. But only through Wittfogel has it become a cornerstone of modern sociology and history.

No introduction to Wittfogel the man would be complete without mentioning the moral dimension of his work. In "Dostoevsky and Bolshevism," an article he wrote in 1922 for the Youth Movement, he indicated his concern for man and society, which underlies his whole scientific development, so much so, that his work was early classed as "moral sociology."[24] The "senselessness and ugliness of suffering" (Caliban) and "the disarming love that turns the other cheek" (Christ) symbolized the seemingly insoluble tragedy "of pre-Bolshevik Russia." Caliban is "the Russian burden, a necessary and general burden, which is evident wherever peasant and enslaved creatures stand in powerless nakedness before the arbitrary bidding of wealthy masters and the evil state." Caliban is "the plague that beat on the doors of the Roman Empire," the "nightmare that is the burden of the Chinese rice peasants," the "rusty spike that is unceasingly driven into the breasts of the Indian Hindu [peasants]." Christ could not solve the problem of the "peasants" and the "enslaved masses"; he could not solve the problem of the "barbarous eastern earth" or the problem of man. Wittfogel thought then that these problems could be solved by the revolution.

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24. Karl August Wittfogel, "Dostojewski und der Bolschewismus," *Vivos Voco*, vol. 2, no. 12 (1922). Cf. also Wittfogel's article, "Marxismus, Proletariat und Weltreligion. Eine soziologische Festellung," *Vivos Voco*, vol. 2, no. 2 (1922).

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In 1947, when Wittfogel discovered "Asiatic" Russia and in his manuscript discussed Russia's "Asiatic restoration," he also outlined a book entitled "Caliban and Lucifer." Throughout *Oriental Despotism* his moral sociology is evident, and particularly so in his chapter, "Total Terror—Total Submission —Total Loneliness." In the twenty years since he completed *Oriental Despotism*, Wittfogel has written many articles in which he has stressed the moral foundation of scientific and political inquiry, the latest of them being "Problems of Marxism and Relations between the East and the West."[25] Presently he is writing a book, *Marxism, Anarchism, and the Nihilist Revolution*, in which he is relating the problem of humanism in Marx to the larger problem of scientific and political purpose. In Wittfogel's view, Marx may not be as great as the Communists claim, but he is greater than the image they evoke.

Few of the labels commonly applied to Wittfogel fit him. He is as controversial today as he was in the Weimar Republic, and indeed, more so. Even as he questions Marx's motives, he says with Marx; "*menschlich*, if you please."[26]

## 2. *The Theoretical Foundations of Wittfogel's Science of Society*[27]

In 1923, the same year that *History and Class Consciousness* was published, Lukács reviewed Wittfogel's first book, *The Science of Bourgeois Society*.[28] He argued that Wittfogel lacked "a real critical (real historical) and thus a real concrete analysis of phenomena," and that "from the standpoint of sociology, he stands too uncritically close to the method of the natural sciences." Wrote Lukács: "There can be no doubt that here we have a Marxist who goes beyond society and history in his analysis." Some years later, Wittfogel wrote: "Lukács persists in seeing things, under all circumstances, as standing on their head."[29] While their criticisms of each other were phrased more or less similarly, each conceived the reality of society and history differently. What divided Lukács and Wittfogel were their differing views of the relation

25. Karl A. Wittfogel, "Problems of Marxism and Relations Between the East and the West," *The Soviet Union: The Seventies and Beyond*, ed. Bernard W. Eissenstat (Lexington, Mass., Toronto and London, 1975), pp. 15-67.

26. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Oekonomie (Rohentwurf), 1857-58* (Berlin, 1953), p. 226.

27. In a different form, this section was first published under the title "Marxismus, Positivismus und Sozialgeschichte. Zur Karl August Wittfogels Gesellschaftstheorie," in *Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte*, Sonderheft 16 (1972) of the *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, ed. Peter C. Ludz, pp. 448-472.

28. *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung* (1925), vol. XI, pp. 224-227. Reproduced in Lukács, *Werke*, Band 2 (Frühschriften II), *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1968), pp. 609-611. Lukács review of N. Bukharin's book, *Theorie des historischen Materialismus, Gemeinverständliches Lehrbuch der marxistischen Soziologie*, which appeared together with his review of Wittfogel's book in both of the above, was phrased more or less similarly.

29. K.A. Wittfogel, "Geopolitik, geographischer Materialismus und Marxismus," part III, in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, vol. III, no. 5, p. 721.

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between Marxism and positivism. And it was this relation that raised the basic question concerning the epistemology and ontology of Marxism in general.

At the end of his life Lukács still maintained that Wittfogel "stands all-too-near to positivism in both idea and method."[30] Reality for Wittfogel—the reality of society and history—was based on empirical facts. Reality for Lukács—a "higher" reality—was in no way identical with empirical facts. Moreover, Lukács maintained: "Only when the methodological priority of facts is broken can reality be understood: facts are the antithesis of the true, the higher reality."[31] But Lukács could not accuse Wittfogel of being either "agnostic" or "neo-Kantian" since Wittfogel himself had argued against both.

### A. The Sociology of the Future

In *The Science of Bourgeois Society*, Wittfogel argued that in modern times positivism was not the philosophy of the bourgeois *Geisteswissenschaften* because it had gone "too far in the wake of Marxism" to be acceptable to the bourgeoisie.[32] Positivism and Ernst Mach were the philosophy of the bourgeois natural sciences. Kant and empirio-criticism were the philosophy of the intellectual sciences. Kant and neo-Kantianism were retrogressive, but Mach and empirio-criticism were progressive and could be dialectically overcome through Marx.[33] According to Wittfogel, the most progressive elements of positivism had been taken over by Marx. The essence of the foundation of historical development could only be determined from the insights of historical materialism and such an investigation could not be divorced from "the facts of reality."[34]

Marxism is not positivism! But Wittfogel argued that just as modern positivism and empirio-criticism were the result of a dialectical development out of Kant, so the development of philosophy could only be dialectically overcome through positivism. Here Wittfogel was suggesting that Marxism was in fact the sociologization of philosophy. Referring to Engels' rejection of both the philosophy of positivism and "philosophy as such," he pointed out that Engels considered Marxism "no philosophy but positive knowledge of the world."[35] Wrote Wittfogel: "Historical materialism interprets reality well, i.e., appropriate actions can take place on its foundation. It leads to the proper (i.e., progressive) formulation of the question... An elastic typology of the stages of development and an equally elastic typology of historical conflicts are the tasks that only a scientific science of history points to."[36] But Wittfogel understood that this "scientific science of history" could not be

30. Letter from Lukács to the author, dateline: Budapest, 21 December 1967.
31. Georg Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (Berlin, 1923), pp. 202 and 222.
32. Karl August Wittfogel, *Die Wissenschaft der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft. Eine marxistische Untersuchung* (Berlin, 1922), p. 30.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

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divorced from the actual making of history: "Only out of concrete reality itself (which one must know completely in order to in fact 'change' it) can one grasp its 'theoretical' foundation and out of it make political practice a revolutionary reality. It is this necessity for reality that this writer follows and in which the greatness of Marxism is revealed."[37]

It is clear that Wittfogel, following Marx, understood that, in contrast to the contemplative and speculative goals of metaphysics, positivism shares with science the practical ideal of knowledge: the aim of knowledge does not end with knowledge itself but should embrace the real world. To know is not only to foresee, but to have a practical guide to conduct, and to be in a position to control the forces of nature for the common good. This was the motto of science and that philosophy which would ally itself with science—positivism. It is in this that the special significance of positivism for social problems can be seen. It finds its most immediate and useful expression in the field of human relations, qua the relations of production, where the coordination of labor and the discipline of science may advance to new levels of social organization. There is no doubt that the tendency to identify objectivity with materiality, which positivism shares with science, caused it to overlap with materialism (i.e., a metaphysics contrary to its own premises). But Wittfogel (and Marx before him) understood that positivism, like materialism, was in its purest form a metaphysics. In Marx's approach to society and history, both positivism and materialism are qualitatively (ontologically) transformed into a new "scientific," as opposed to a "philosophic" *Gestalt*.

Wittfogel envisioned Marxism as "the sociology of the future."[38] Such a sociology would be based on two fundamental premises: 1) large-scale collective work reflecting a division of intellectual labor analogous to Marx's division of industrial labor, and 2) the organization and coordination of academic disciplines and auxiliary sciences. Concerning the latter, he wrote: "European history, for example, must work hand-in-hand with East Asian history, ethnology and general sociology."[39] The "Marxist view," as Wittfogel saw it, emphasized the connection between "organized collective research" and science. Only in this way could a synthesis—a total picture of the social order and history—be constructed: "Social theory. And, to be sure, social theory in the widest possible sense, is what Marx had in mind when he spoke of sociology as an anatomy of human society."[40] Reflecting his own particular concerns, Wittfogel suggested that the sociology of the future must combine, and in a fundamental way, political economy and economic geography. These he called the "sociological core sciences."[41]

Wittfogel's conception of science, although entirely his own, was consistent

37. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
39. *Ibid.*, pp. 18 and 65.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 65.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 33 and 82.

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with his conception of Marxism: "Our definition of science—the systematic means of orientation in nature and society to the requirements of subsistence —is true of all social orders insofar as they constitute an 'historical unity'."[42] The conception of science as a "means of orientation" he took from the neo-Kantian, Hans Vaihinger. But Wittfogel insisted that experience, knowledge and science are not chance happenings in the minds of individuals but new directions forged out of the natural and social processes of production. So understood, new and fruitful systems of observation and new ideas are the points of departure for all undertakings by which economy, society and "collective ideas" become revolutionized and adapted.[43]

### B. The Critique of Bourgeois Society

In 1924, Wittfogel published his *History of Bourgeois Society* in which he developed his own and Marx's concept of bourgeois society.[44] Wittfogel pointed out that Marx is the greatest historian of bourgeois society because he examined the economic categories of that society not in their rigid and isolated completeness but as living and contradictory moments of a social totality. It was this dialectical and materialistic approach that separated Marx from the mechanical approach of positivistic bourgeois sociologists. The positivists strove for a unified view of phenomena, both physical and human, through the application and methods of the natural sciences; but Marx pointed out that bourgeois society was not visible. Its identification—the identification of all phenomena both physical and human—presupposes the construction of its concept. Moreover, the concrete and the given empirical facts of political economy are meaningless without the construction of the concept of its object. They cannot be identified and defined by their immediate visible and sensory appearance.

The concept of bourgeois society must be conceived as a whole—as a totality. The view of the social whole is determined by its complexity, or, more properly, by its structure. All phenomena are determined by the structure of the mode of production and the existence of this structure is recognized by its effects. Analyzing the structure of the whole is for Marx the basic precondition for making the science of society the science of history. Thus, at the same time that Marx analyzes the structure of the bourgeois (capitalist) mode of production he expounds a general theory of history. The total critique of bourgeois society, according to Wittfogel's reading of Marx, can only be made after the concept of the object of that society is established. Moreover, the very formulation of the total concept of bourgeois society, both historically and comparatively, is itself the total critique of that society.

In his Marxist critique of bourgeois society, Wittfogel could not escape a discussion of the greatest theorist on the modern bourgeois scene—Max

42. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
44. Karl August Wittfogel, *Geschichte der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Vienna, 1924).

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Weber. While Weber's debt to positivism was at least as great as Marx's, his position resulted from a combination of positivism and neo-Kantianism. The fundamental contradiction between Weber's neo-Kantian agnosticism and his quasi-positivist position *vis-à-vis* the science of bourgeois society is evident in all of his work. Wittfogel was quick to point this out. Weber's rejection of all *Weltanschauungen* crowned his neo-Kantian agnosticism. Thus Wittfogel found in Weber that "The temporal and differentiated elements congeal... into a grotesque scientific nihilism—into a confused 'uniform' theory of knowledge." He found in Weber "an extraordinary nihilistic chaos." This "chaos" was precisely Weber's lack of a structured and systematic approach to world history—his lack of a scientific world view. According to Wittfogel, "Unfortunately Weber's method prevented him from finding solutions to the problems he himself had raised."[45]

As with Marx, it was Weber's approach to reality that is the key to his view of history, comparative analysis and universal development—to the character of his work. For the whole of his life Weber was concerned with what he called a "positive overcoming of the materialist conception of history."[46] Weber compared ideas and concepts *about* social, institutional and historical reality, while Marx was directly concerned *with* reality. Weber himself commented that his "ideal types" could not be found empirically anywhere in reality.[47] This separated Weber from Marx and Wittfogel from Weber.

In his analysis of bourgeois society, Wittfogel, following Weber, made the city the core of his approach and its development is the nodal point of his discussion of capitalism, the burgher and the class struggle. In analyzing the "spirit of capitalism," however, Wittfogel clearly follows Marx. He also clearly follows Marx in relating the development of the city to the mode of production. And it is precisely the mode of production that determines the character of city development as it does all the other elements of bourgeois society. But the concept of the economic must first be constructed for the mode of production. Wittfogel saw in Marx that this concept could not be constructed without first considering the natural foundations for production. Thus, as it did for Marx, Wittfogel's discussion of the city led directly to a discussion of the agricultural setting.

According to Marx, the foundation of every division of labor is the separation of the town from the country. Indeed, the whole economic history of society is said to be summed up in this antithesis.[48] Thus, Wittfogel stressed the importance of the character-giving form of the division of labor—the division of agricultural and industrial labor—for the whole of world history. And in this context, he expounded what was to become the nodal point of his

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 98f.
46. Marianne Weber, *Max Weber—Ein Lebensbild* (Tübingen, 1926), pp. 350f and 617.
47. Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (citations refer to the third enlarged edition of this work, Tübingen, 1968), pp. 149 and 161.
48. *Marx-Engels Werke*, Band 23, *Das Kapital I* (Berlin, 1962), p. 373.

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approach to Marxism—the role of the natural factor in history. Wittfogel saw the ontological relation between man and nature and the production relations of man and the natural setting at the core of Marx's economic concept.

Wittfogel took Marx seriously when he read in *Capital*: "Labor is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process in which man of his own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material reactions between himself and nature... By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature."[49] Earlier, Marx had written: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please: they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past."[50] In Wittfogel's view, Marx based his whole analysis of the capitalist mode of production on the natural setting. What did Marx write in *Capital*? "This mode is based on the dominion of man over nature... It is not the tropics with their luxuriant vegetation, but the temperate zone, that is the motherland of capital. It is not the mere fertility of the soil, the variety of its natural products, the changes of the seasons, which form the physical basis for the social division of labor, and which, by changes in the natural surroundings, spur man to the multiplication of his wants, his capabilities, his means and modes of labor. It is the necessity of bringing a natural power under the control of society."[51]

In *History of Bourgeois Society* we find Wittfogel's first mention of the "naturally conditioned powers of production (*naturbedingte Produktivkräfte*)." These powers of production, according to Wittfogel, are equally important and sometimes more important than the "socially conditioned powers of production (*gesellschaftlich bedingte Produktivkräfte*)" in the origin of an historical formation.[52] The relation between nature and society became for Wittfogel the key to the understanding of Marx's conception of the mode of production in general and historical materialism in particular. He wrote: "Nature and society succumbed, as we have learned from experience, to a certain regularity in their manifestations."[53] Marx had declared that all production of surplus value, and thus the development of capitalism, had for its natural basis the productiveness of agricultural labor. Noting this, Wittfogel contended that the process of exploitation could best be seen in agriculture. In Europe, it was the peculiarity of agricultural production that provided the key to the development of capitalism. Taking his cue from Marx, Wittrogel's concentration on agricultural, as opposed to industrial, economics carried his analysis beyond the bourgeois scene. He

49. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
50. *Marx-Engels Werke*, Band 8, "Der achzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte" (Berlin, 1960), p. 115.
51. Marx, *Das Kapital I*, p. 536.
52. Wittfogel, *Geschichte*, p. 183.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

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asked that question which is the key to his own development since his early critique of Western bourgeois society: Why was there no independent development of capitalism in Asia?

### C. Beyond Bourgeois Society

Marx described "the motherland of capital" in terms of its natural setting. If the peculiarity of agricultural production provided the key to the understanding of the development of capitalism in Europe, Wittfogel surmised, could it not also provide the key to the understanding of the non-development of capitalism in Asia and elsewhere beyond Europe? Indeed, the moment Wittfogel carried Marx's method beyond bourgeois society to "Asiatic" society, he caused a revolution in the science of society itself.

Wittfogel first read about a peculiar "hydraulic-bureaucratic official-state" in China and India in Weber's "Sociology of Religion" and his magnum opus, *Economy and Society*.[54] From Weber he also learned that the cities in China and Asia were for the most part essentially bureaucratic administrative centers that had never achieved either political or military independence from the state as had cities in Western Europe. Although Wittfogel contended that Weber "stole" this insight from Marx, he now understood not only the difference between Western and Asiatic cities but also the existence of a specific societal type in Asia. Moreover, he noted that with the dissolution of "Asiatic" feudalism (in China, India, Egypt and Babylon) and the beginnings of the hydraulic-bureaucratic official-state, the power position of the landlords had been either completely eliminated (as in China) or seriously reduced by the new "despotic" state.[55] Thus a great source for the development of capitalism—the exploitation of the countryside by the capitalists—was blocked. Wrote Wittfogel: "Asia did not develop to industrial capitalism (at least not independently), because of the two fundamental preconditions—capital and a proletariat—it lacked the second, the free proletarian wage earner."[56]

Linking Weber's insights on the development of cities with Marx's insights on the modes of production and the powers of production, Wittfogel attempted a structured comparison of the development of pre-industrial cities into modern industrial cities.[57] He distinguished between the development of Russian cities and cities in the West and quoted Trotsky to the effect that the

54. Max Weber, "Konfuzianismus und Taoism," *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tübingen, 1920), vol. I, pp. 291, 294, 318; and Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, Grundrisse der Sozialökonomik, part III (Tübingen, 1920), vol. I, pp. 542, 669, 659 and 706; vol. II, pp. 117ff and 542. Hereafter, my references will be to the latest edition of Weber's *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Grundrisse der verstehehden Soziologie*, fourth edition (Tübingen, 1963). On China, see vol. II, pp. 568f, 615f, and 764.

55. Later, having learned more about the earliest origins of irrigation agriculture in China and Asia generally, Wittfogel gave up the concept of an "Asiatic feudalism."

56. Wittfogel, *Geschichte*, pp. 118f.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

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old cities of Russia "like the cities of the Asiatic despotisms, had almost no production functions. They were essentially military-administrative centers."[58] But Wittfogel did not now and for many years to come consider Russia an "Asiatic despotism." Only after reading Lenin's debates with Plekhanov concerning the possibility of an "Asiatic restoration" in Russia after the revolution did Wittfogel develop the concept of an "Asiatic" Russia.[59] But shortly after completing *History of Bourgeois Society*, Wittfogel found confirmation in Plekhanov's *Fundamental Problems of Marxism* for what he had learned from Weber and Marx concerning the specific character of society in Asia.[60]

Of primary interest in Wittfogel's discussion of the city, as well as in his discussion of all other aspects of bourgeois society, is his comparative approach. The variation in the growth of cities, particularly in the differences between Western and "Asiatic" cities, is a key emphasis in his book, as is the comparative approach to social and historical phenomena generally. The reason for this is that Wittfogel had discovered that Marx, in contrast to positivist bourgeois sociologists from Comte to Franz Müller-Lyer who supported a philosophical-historical theory of "an unchanging line of development for all peoples," had rejected the concept of a unilinear development of society in history and adopted a multilinear view. Wrote Wittfogel: "If we, in addition, bear in mind the dissimilarity of the economic structure of 'Asiatic' and 'ancient' societies from the social conditions of the middle ages, then we can understand clearly that Marx never contended that the class societies of the West, antiquity and Asia should be thrown into one pot."[61] As always, he found Marx agreeing with him: "...events strikingly analogous but taking place in different historical surroundings led to totally different results. By studying each of these forms of evolution separately and then comparing them one can easily find the clue to this phenomenon, but one will never arrive there by using as one's master key a general historical-philosophical theory, the supreme virtue of which consists in being supra-historical."[62]

In his first book devoted wholly to China, *Awakening China*, published in 1925, Wittfogel included "the Asiatic mode of production" in his discussion of the relation between nature and society.[63] He now recognized that China's

58. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

59. See Wittfogel, "Russia and Asia," *World Politics*, vol. II, no. 4 (1950), pp. 445-462; "The Marxist View of Russian Society and Revolution," *World Politics*, vol. XII, no. 4 (1960), pp. 487-508; and "Russia and the East: A Comparison and Contrast," *Slavic Review*, vol. XXII, no. 4 (1963), pp. 627-649.

60. G. Plekhanov, *Die Grundprobleme des Marxismus* (Stuttgart, 1920), pp. 28, 47ff, and 58.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

62. Wittfogel quotes from Karl Korsch, *Kernpunkte der materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung* (Berlin, 1922), p. 51. See also Marx, *Marx-Engels Werke*, Band 19 (Berlin, 1962), p. 112.

63. Wittfogel, *Das erwachende China, op.cit.*, pp. 16f.

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unified economic, social and political system, both past and present, was rooted in the peculiarity of its "naturally-conditioned powers of production." With respect to "Asiatic" society, he cited Marx on the necessity of socially controlling a "power of nature," in this instance, water, and he wrote: "Water regulation was (and is) the live-nerve of Chinese agriculture." In this connection, he also noted the peculiarity of the decisive power of production in China—irrigation (and the necessity for a unified system of state control for purposes of water-regulation) as the material root for the decline of the feudal order and the rise of the Chinese official-state: "man-made irrigation"—Marx's point—and "the powerful hydraulic-bureaucracy"—Weber's point—because for Wittfogel the two fundamental characteristics of all "Oriental" social systems.

More importantly, Wittfogel also took up the question of the class-state in China, India and Egypt. Using examples taken from Marx, he recognized that through their functions the managers of irrigation and flood control had become a ruling class. Marx, while acknowledging the existence of the hydraulic state and its "sovereign," had failed to specify the existence in Asiatic society of a ruling class that controlled the means of production. In discussing Weber's conception of the powerful, non-laboring, hydraulic bureaucracy in China and elsewhere in Asia, Wittfogel not only went beyond Marx but beyond Weber, who had referred only to the existence of a "ruling estate." Wittfogel's conception of the Chinese class-state included both the administrative officialdom and the absolute sovereign.[64]

In pointing to the bureaucracy as the ruling class in Asiatic society, Wittfogel was following the logic of Marx's analysis. But Marx had paid little attention to the problems of power. It was from Weber that Wittfogel learned about bureaucracy and power (he recognized in Max Weber "a man with a good eye for the real problems of power"). These two concerns were crucial in Wittfogel's construction of the concept of "Asiatic" society.

In 1925, just as Wittfogel was completing *Awakening China*, David Riazanov, the head of the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow, edited and published several of Marx's articles under the title "Karl Marx on China and India."[65] In these articles and Riazanov's notes, Wittfogel discovered that Marx had considered two major circumstances characteristic of Asiatic society: 1) the central government's control of the great public works, particularly water-works, and 2) the domestic union of agriculture and manufacturing pursuits in the dispersed self-contained village communities. These village communities Marx had called the "solid foundation of Asiatic despotism." Riazanov pointed out that Marx had emphasized the "lack of movement" in the social fundament of Asiatic society and its "capacity for

64. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

65. "Karl Marx über China und Indien, mit Einleitung von Rjasanoff," *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, vol. I, no. 2 (1925), pp. 370-402.

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resistance" to change. In this context, Marx had insisted that in India, and for the first time in Asia, the destruction of Asiatic society was being brought about by the penetration of English capitalism. Marx not only wrote that European capitalism had been able to breach the "Chinese wall" and the inseparable bond between agriculture and industry that had given birth to the Asiatic mode of production, but that "English interference...dissolved these small, semi-barbarian, semi-civilized communities [in India] by blowing up their economic bases, and thus produced the greatest and, to speak the truth, the only *social* revolution ever heard of in Asia." Asking, "Can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia?," Marx answered, "If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution."[66]

Marx laid the basis in his historical and comparative analysis and critique of bourgeois society for carrying the insights of historical materialism beyond bourgeois society, but he never developed the concept. He made some brilliant observations but left the field to others. It is interesting to note that Lukács considered historical materialism "the self-knowledge of capitalist society" and he further contended that its application to "the pre-capitalistic age"—to non-capitalist societies—presented "a very essential and important methodological problem."[67] He had a premonition. And a correct one! For when Wittfogel carried Marx's method beyond bourgeois society, not only was it broadened, but its object was transformed.

### D. Dialectics and Materialism

If, before the publication of Marx's articles on China and India, Wittfogel had already discerned in *Capital* and other writings of the mature Marx his thesis on the "Asiatic mode of production," he had even more clearly discerned the essence of Marx's most important formulation of his concept of historical materialism as set forth in the section of *The German Ideology* devoted to a critique of Feuerbach, published for the first time in 1926.[68] Appearing in the *Marx-Engels Archiv I*, under the title "Marx and Engels on Feuerbach," this manuscript was also edited and introduced by Riazanov. The publication of Marx's Feuerbach manuscript was largely ignored by Marxists, but Wittfogel immediately recognized it as the cornerstone of Marx's views on nature and history. It is in this Feuerbach manuscript that

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 389-390.
67. Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (1923), pp. 237 and 238.
68. "Marx und Engels über Feuerbach, Der erste Teil der *Deutschen Ideologie*," *Marx-Engels Archiv I*, edited by D. Riasanov (Frankfurt am Main, 1962). The first complete edition of *Der deutschen Ideologie, Kritik der neuesten deutschen Philosophie in ihren Repräsentanten Feuerbach, B. Bauer und Stirner, und des deutschen Sozialismus in seinen verschiedenen Propheten 1845-1846*, was published as Section I, volume 5 of the *Marx-Engels historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1933).

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the relation between Marxism and positivism can be most readily recognized and analyzed.

What is immediately apparent in Marx's Feuerbach manuscript of 1845-46 is his rejection of his earlier position in general and his 1844 manuscripts in particular. Here he adopted the scientific outlook that he would follow for the rest of his life. He begins with a clear declaration: "We know only one science, the science of history." The relation between man and nature is understood at the core of this science: "The premises from which we begin are not arbitrary ones, not dogmas, but real premises from which abstractions can only be made in the imagination. They are the real individuals, their activity and the material conditions under which they live, both those which they find already existing and those produced by their activity. These premises can thus be verified in a purely empirical way. The first premise of all human history is, of course, the existence of living individuals. Thus the first fact to be established is the physical organization of those individuals and their consequent relation to the rest of nature. Of course, we cannot here go into the actual physical nature of man or into the natural conditions in which man finds himself—geological, oro-hydrological, climate and so on. *The writing of history must always set out from these natural bases and their modifications in the course of history through the action of men.*"[69] Throughout his Feuerbach manuscript, Marx stresses the empirical base of historical materialism: "Empirical observation must in each separate instance bring out empirically, and without any mystification and speculation, the connection of the social and political structure with production." In conjunction with this position, Marx added his critique of philosophy: "Where speculation ends...in real life—there real, positive science begins: the representation of the practical activity, of the practical process of development of men. Empty talk about consciousness ceases, and real knowlege takes its place. *When reality is depicted, philosophy as an independent branch of activity loses its medium of existence.*"[70]

*The Poverty of Philosophy* written immediately after *The German Ideology*, carried the argument further. Here Marx called the application of any "absolute method," such as Hegel's, to political economy "the metaphysics of political economy." He ridiculed socialists and communists as utopians who "continue to seek science in their minds." For Marx, "science, which is the product of historical movement, has associated itself consciously with it, has ceased to be doctrinaire and has become revolutionary." "On the evening of every general restructuring of society," wrote Marx, revolution is not the first word but "the last word of social science."[71]

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69. *Ibid.*, pp. 237ff. Author's italics.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 238 and 240. Author's italics.
71. Marx, *Misère de la Philosophie, Réponse à la Philosophie de la Misère de M. Proudhon*, MEGA, vol. I, part 6 (Berlin, 1932), pp. 117-228.

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In 1928 and 1930, Wittfogel wrote two long articles based on insights gleaned from Marx's Feuerbach manuscript: "Geopolitics, Geographical Materialism and Marxism" and "The Natural Causes of Economic History."[72] Historical materialism, being both dialectical and materialistic, was for Wittfogel the key to the clarification of the natural factor in history. The converse was also true—the natural factor was the key to the correct understanding of historical materialism. The fundamental question was "the question of the relation of man and nature." All other relations—those between nature and economy, economy and society, society and history—stemmed from it.

In expounding Marx's ideas, Wittfogel was in fact expounding his own. Just what this meant in terms of Marx's ideas and in terms of Wittfogel's will be dealt with below. But it can be said here that following Marx's lead, Wittfogel rounded out historical materialism in order to create a workable science of society which, freed from its bourgeois base, could be applied to Asia—that part of the world that had become for him what Europe had been for Marx—and to the rest of the world as well.

According to Wittfogel's reading of Marx's materialist conception of history, there is no contradiction between man and nature since man is "a very specific part of nature." Human labor does not destroy the natural element in matter but it does change its *Gestalt*. Man's relation to nature is thus an active relation, and human labor, as man's most decisive activity, assumes the central role in man's development. Economy and society grow out of the 'mediating' role of labor in man's relation to nature and the requirements of production. This last recognizes the central importance of the "natural setting." Paraphrasing Marx, Wittfogel wrote: "Man and his work on one side, nature and its material on the other—this is the fundamental relation, the eternal natural condition of human life upon which every form of this life, and above all its social form, is dependent."[73]

In Wittfogel's mind, what distinguished Marx from his predecessors was the fact that he had pointed to an "inner order" in the process of production or, more precisely, in the mode of production. In discussing the role of the natural factor, Wittfogel saw this factor as enriching Marx's conception of order in society and history. It seems clear that Wittfogel understood that he was not only explaining Marx's conception of historical materialism but that he had to go beyond Marx. What Wittfogel did was to concentrate on Marx's intent more than on his performance. Why was this necessary? The answer to

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72. Wittfogel, "Geopolitik, geographischer Materialismus und Marxismus," part I in *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus,* vol. 3, no. 1 (1929), pp. 17-51; part II in vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 485-522); and part III in vol. 3, no. 5, pp. 698-735; "Die naturlichen Ursachen der Wirtschaftsgeschichte," part I in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik,* vol. 67, no. 4 (1932), pp. 466-491; part II in vol. 67, no. 5, pp. 579-609; and part III in vol. 67, no. 6, pp. 711-731.

73. "Geopolitik...," part II, pp. 505ff; "Die natürlichen Ursachen...," part I, p. 474.

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this question, which is implicit in Wittfogel's articles, is that Marx neither fully worked out his own materialist conception of history nor applied it systematically to world history. Only in his Feuerbach manuscript did Marx attempt to arrive at a conceptualization of historical materialism and only in the first volume of *Capital* is there an attempt to apply it. But even there Marx developed it fully only in relation to early capitalism. For the rest, we were left with little more than hints which are frequently as brilliant as his methodological intent is profound but which constitute only a starting-point for a broad understanding. Wittfogel's rounding out of historical materialism entailed first a systematic conceptualization of Marx's key ideas, second, their systematic developmental coordination, and third, their systematic application to world history.

The concept of the mode of production is as central to Wittfogel's approach to society and history as it is to Marx. But Wittfogel is more consistent in his use of it. Marx wavered in his emphasis on the mode of production. Sometimes he made property or property relations his key criterion, most evidently so in the *Grundrisse* (1857-58). Wittfogel never wavered in his emphasis on the primary importance of the mode of production and, in addition, he recognized that a given mode of production might be compatible with more than one form of property. On this point, and especially concerning Asiatic societies, Wittfogel's analysis of property and property relations is more systematically developed than that of Marx! It might be said that with respect to the fundamental importance of the mode of production for an analysis of economic, social and political phenomena, Wittfogel took Marx's central concept more seriously than did Marx himself.

The mode of production is manifested in the relations of production. If the relation of man to nature is central to the mode of production, then its social aspect is central to the relations of production. According to Wittfogel, Marx's decisive formulation dealt first with the relation of socially working man to nature and then with the relation of socially working man to his fellow-men. The totality of these relations constitutes society. The interlocking of the mode of production and the relations of production is indicated by the fact that a change in the mode of production causes a change in all social relations.

Essential to Wittfogel's understanding of Marx's concept of the mode of production is the idea that the mode of production—not the relations of production—distinguishes the great historical epochs of production. Wittfogel's analysis refined and bolstered this idea. It also stressed that the mode of production is determined by the means of production. This aspect of Marx's materialistic position is generally recognized. But Wittfogel elaborated on another aspect of Marx's position that has been completely ignored—that the means of production are either "conditioned by nature (*naturbedingt*)" or "conditioned by society (*gesellschaftlich bedingt*)." As Wittfogel saw it, it is the peculiar character of these two types of production

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and the ways in which they are correlated that determine the different modes of production. To be sure, all natural powers of production have a social quality, but only under specific historical conditions do they become effective. All social powers of production are conditioned by the natural powers of production which become effective during the process of production.

The means of production that become activized during the process of production comprise both objective and subjective elements. Among the latter are knowledge, skill and organization. Different from Adam Smith, who stressed the organizational means of production (division of labor and cooperation), Marx, Wittfogel maintained, had insisted that the material means of production were the developmentally decisive factor, and he stressed particularly man-made means (tools), and this, although he was aware of the central role of cooperation and the natural means of production in the Asiatic mode of production. In his nature articles, Wittfogel associated himself with Marx's tool-oriented materialistic approach.

Which natural elements are made effective by socially working man depends upon the totality of the socially developed powers of production (labor aptitude, organization of labor, science and its technical applicability, the dimension and effectiveness of the man-made means of production). The direction in which the processes of labor are socially altered (if they are altered at all) is not determined by the arbitrary choices of producing man but by the kind, abundance and combination of the socially attainable natural powers of production at a given historical moment.

Marx was not unaware of the significance of location (*Lage*) as an essential economic factor. Semantically he acknowledged this factor, but terminologically he obscured it by speaking of transportation as an act of production: the production of locomotion. Wittfogel reworked these ideas but he went far beyond them in his discussion of location and the different forms of transportation that, other conditions being equal, would be likely to make one factor more significant with regard to communication (*Verkehr*) *vis-à-vis* production and military and political power. This concept did not negate what Wittfogel considered the decisive role of production, but it broadened the concept of the mode of production and gave a new meaning to Marx's idea of the formative role of the means of communication (*Verkehrsmittel*).

Having conceptualized and coordinated what he considered to be Marx's central idea and his core-categories, Wittfogel outlined a universal history of the development of mankind based on the concept of the mode of production and the powers of production that characterized the major socio-economic types and sub-types. Wittfogel's macro-historical and macro-ecological approach inevitably involved comparison. He pointed out that Marx and Engels themselves had warned against considering the development of capitalism in the West as a master key to the understanding of the development of society everywhere. His task, as he saw it, was to distinguish

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conceptually, empirically, and from an ecological standpoint, the different patterns of history. Leaving it to students of ecology and history to familiarize themselves with the facts and arguments and with the underlying documentation given in Wittfogel's geo-historical sketch, I shall in this context mention only a few ideas that first appeared significantly in these two long articles and that reappeared in his later writings in more elaborate form.

According to Wittfogel, economically active man changes his environment in two ways: first, through the "transformation" and second, through the "actualization" of operationally essential natural conditions. Laboring man can transform affected parts of his environment without changing it, or he may recognize new elements and by exploiting them in a new way actualize new powers of production. A review of the general economic history of mankind, Wittfogel noted, reveals that most of the world's societies were based on a stationary economic system. If this was indeed the case, traditional economic and social history has not only failed to explain the why of development in certain economic complexes, but also the why of non-development (stagnation) in others.

In the first of his two articles, Wittfogel presented a typology of irrigation societies in Asia. In the second he placed this typology in a broader frame since his continuing researches had led him far beyond the Asian scene. Following Marx, he recognized that every stage of society corresponds to a particular level of production. A new mode of production does not initially exhaust its possibilities—a "process of maturation" must precede its total exploitation. Whether or not this process opens up new dimensions when it is completed depends in each case on the specific factors involved.

Essentially Wittfogel's socio-historical analysis followed the outline given in his *History of Bourgeois Society*—primitive communism, primitive agriculture, antiquity, the Asiatic mode of production, feudalism, and capitalism. But now his macro-ecological approach was broadened and additional empirical data had further illuminated the developmental peculiarities of the different levels of production. In accordance with his thesis that most of the world's societies were based on a stationary system, his first four levels of production experienced "lateral" development. Only the last two experienced "vertical" development.[74] Overall, it must be said that, while Wittfogel's geo-historical approach at this time was clear, it was by no means as systematic and as differentiated as it would become in his later writings.

What Wittfogel called the "dialectic of geographical location" played a different role in all three of the great agrarian class societies: the ancient, the Asiatic and the feudal. The natural factor played a more dominant role in the

74. Wittfogel borrowed the concepts "lateral development" and "vertical development" from Franz Müller Lyer (*Die Zähmung der Normen I*, Munich, 1918, pp. 224ff). For Wittfogel, "lateral" development involves a quantitative but not a qualitative change; "vertical" development involves both.

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formation of the Asiatic mode of production than in that of the ancient or the feudal, the last two having an essentially similar natural-economic base. Thus Wittfogel's discussion of the Asiatic mode of production comes closest to a determinist view, his discussion of East-Rome less so, and his discussion of classical antiquity and feudalism is compatible with the concepts of historical possibilism and probabilism.

In Wittfogel's view, the natural factor remained effective in economic history until and even during the early period of the machine age, when science began to influence industrial practice directly. But Wittfogel's analysis went far beyond the question of the natural requirements for production. The action of socially laboring man in the early, middle and late periods of capitalism, and in accordance with different conditions, transformed and actualized (or failed to actualize) different natural elements in the process of production. Variations in modern capitalism reflect differing empirical conditions—communicational location, location of raw materials, availability and proximity of mineral wealth, etc.

Which factor ultimately determines historical development—the natural factor or the social factor? For Wittfogel, this was the most important question raised by historical materialism. Indeed, in his detailed theoretical and historical analysis, it determined the structure of his whole argument. The geographical materialists, with certain modifications, emphasized natural conditions. But this approach to materialism was one-sided in that it disregarded dialectics. Lukács' thesis that production relations are decisive for the development of society was equally one-sided in that it stressed an abstract type of dialectics. And in the later writings of Kautsky, Wittfogel found a similar "turn to an idealistic conception of historical development."[75]

Wittfogel's answer to the question of which factor ultimately determines historical development can be found in his arguments with Lukács. Lukács reversed Marx's relation between the mode of production and the relations of production. In considering nature a social category (in his quasi-Marxist terminology, a "fetish"), Lukács, Wittfogel claimed, "imitates...with economic means the idealistic Kantian theory of knowledge."[76] In raising the problem of whether the development of the social powers of production in modern industry would compensate for a decline in natural wealth (in its economic form) and thereby decrease the importance of "nature-conditioned" relations of production, Lukács contended that "socialized man," in the course of historical development, had gradually come to rule over nature. He spoke specifically about "the subjugation of nature under the category of socialization."[77]

Wittfogel pointed out that Lukács had misunderstood the meaning of

75. "Geopolitik...," part III, p. 720.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 703f and 720f.
77 Lukács, *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein* (1923), p. 239.

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Marx's formulation regarding the "receding of natural barriers (*Zurückweichens der Naturschränke*)." With Marx, the man-nature relation was modified in the epoch of modern industry, but never lost. Moreover, Wittfogel asserted that Lukács' misunderstanding of Marx's formulation was the inevitable consequence of his subjectively activistic concept, a concept that was neither dialectical nor materialistic in Marx's sense because it ignored Marx's concept of the relation between the natural and social powers of production in the historical process. Inherent in Wittfogel's argument is the conclusion that, in the case of the geographical materialists, materialism without dialectics led to mechanism and in the case of Lukács and similar "Marxists," dialectics without materialism led to idealism.

For Lukács, the form a society takes is not dependent on its mode of production and the way this mode of production interlocks with its natural conditions, but results from the interaction of social elements. For Lukács, it is not the relation of man to nature that is most important, but man's active conceptualizing and structuring of society. Thus all categories are social categories and there are no historical or conceptual limitations on man's actions other than those he himself imposes.

Eschewing a one-sided approach, Wittfogel was at pains to give as full a picture as possible. In his analysis he dealt with the natural and the social conditions for production and their interrelation. He insisted that when all their functions were considered, the active side—social labor—was preeminently important. But he also insisted that all social labor was tied to a material substratum—nature—whose character determined the direction of social labor—that is, whether society moved forward or remained stationary, whether higher or lower forms of labor productivity developed. Historically considered, this was the lesson of dialectics and materialism.

### E. The Crisis of the Class Struggle: Stagnation and Development in History

Wittfogel completed *Economy and Society in China. Toward the Scientific Analysis of a Great Asiatic Agrarian Society* in 1930.[78] It was published in 1931, the same year that a special discussion on the Asiatic mode of production was held in Leningrad, which rejected the idea of a specific "Asiatic mode of production" in general, and Wittfogel's new book in particular.[79] Although Wittfogel was not invited to this discussion, he did speak at another conference in Moscow in this same year celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of Hegel's death. The papers of this latter conference were published under the title *Hegel and Dialectical Materialism*.[80]

78. Wittfogel, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas, op.cit.*, Erster Teil: Produktivkräfte, Produktions und Zirkulationsprozess (Leipzig, 1931).
79. *Diskussia ob aziatskom sposobe proizvodstva* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1931).
80. *Gegel' i dialekticheskii materializm* (Moscow, 1932).

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Although Wittfogel spoke extemporaneously, his remarks were in large part based on a paper he had just written in Germany for a book celebrating Hegel's death that was never published.[81] He titled this paper "Historical Development and Revolution in Hegel's Philosophy" and in it he argued against the idealistic and philosophical transformation of Marxism that was then in progress. He ended by saying: "Dialectics is first a means for the interpretation of what was, and then a tool for the illumination of what will be. The *philosophy* of history must become the *science* of history and only then will it be possible not only to interpret the world but to change it." But his plea fell on deaf ears. By 1931, Soviet Marxists were doing for Soviet Marxism what Lukács had done for "Western" Marxism—transforming the social science of historical materialism into the philosophy of dialectical materialism and thereby transforming the epistemological and ontological foundations of Marxism.[82]

At the Leningrad discussion on the Asiatic mode of production, Wittfogel was criticized not only for his theory of Asiatic society, but specifically for his emphasis on the natural factor. To be sure, Wittfogel had claimed in his nature articles that the "process of exploitation" could "best be seen in agriculture" and he had pursued this point to its ultimate conclusion in *Economy and Society in China*. Because the question of class was the "decisive question" for Marxists, it was said in Leningrad that the "Achilles heel" of the theory of the Asiatic mode of production was its inherent conception of class and class structure. What then was Wittfogel's view of the class structure of Asiatic society and what did it imply concerning the Marxist conception of class in general?

In *Economy and Society in China*—this Marxist book with the Weberian title—Wittfogel noted that what had thrown light on the economic history of modern capitalism also appeared to be correct for the treatment of the great agrarian societies. Drawing upon a number of different disciplines, most particularly sociology, he attempted the kind of interdisciplinary approach he had elaborated in his critique of bourgeois science. As might be expected, he juxtaposed the Asiatic mode of production to the capitalist mode of production. Years later, he wrote: "From 1926 I concentrated on an analysis of China as representative of the economy and society of Asia, as Marx had concentrated on the analysis of England as representative of capitalist economy. In my book, *Economy and Society in China*. . . I compared China and other Asiatic countries (Egypt, Mesopotamia, India) and the Asiatic pattern as a whole with non-Asiatic patterns, as Marx had compared England with other Capitalist countries (Holland, France, Germany) and the capitalist

81. Wittfogel, however, did publish a number of articles on Hegel in this year, the most important of which was "Hegel über China," *Unter dem Banner des Marxismus*, vol. 5, no. 3 (1931), pp. 346-362. His argument was essentially the same in all of them.

82. A parallel development can be recognized in the Frankfurt Institut für Sozialforschung.

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pattern as a whole with non-capitalist patterns of economy and society."[83]

Both Marx and Weber had elaborated a crisis theory of capitalist bourgeois society. For Marx, the crisis emanated from the capitalist mode of production; for Weber, from the bureaucratic power structure of bourgeois society. Wittfogel elaborated a crisis theory of Asiatic (hydraulic) society. But for Wittfogel, the crisis emanated from both the Asiatic mode of production and the bureaucratic power structure of Asiatic society. Marx's theory of the class struggle as the motive force of history grew out of his conception of the crisis of bourgeois (capitalist) society. Wittfogel's theory of the crisis of the class struggle grew out of his conception of the crisis of Asiatic (hydraulic) society.

According to Wittfogel, "social analysis is social history," but "social analysis means class analysis"—"the 'social' structure of a concrete societal totality is its class structure."[84] Just as Marx analyzed the origin and character of the bouregois class structure in England, so Wittfogel analyzed the origin and character of the "Asiatic" class structure in China. He discovered that the state was the "dominant agent of agricultural production"—through its regulation of large-scale waterworks, the state participated actively in the mode of production.[85] Moreover, in analyzing the interaction between the foundation and the superstructure of Chinese society, Wittfogel discovered that the dynamic element at the core of economic and social life did not suspend this continuity but strengthened it, resulting in what he would later call the classic type of an unprogressive society—a stagnant society—which reproduces itself. Thus stagnation as well as development is a central problem of social history.[86]

Marx's concept of the mode of production was primarily economic. Wittfogel's analysis of "Asiatic" society challenged this view. Although his new concept of the mode of production did not fundamentally alter Marx's concept of the powers of production, it did fundamentally alter Marx's concept of the relations of production because it challenged the thesis that the general antagonistic mechanism—between the powers of production and the relations of production—within the mode of production inevitably produces a revolutionary rupture which determines the transition from one mode of production to another and thereby the transformation of a socio-historical epoch. If the relations of production (including class relations) are not determined wholly by the economic mechanism of the mode of production

83. Wittfogel, "The Hydraulic Approach to Pre-Spanish Mesoamerica," in Richard S. MacNeish, ed., *The Prehistory of the Tehuacan Valley*, vol. 4, *Chronology and Irrigation*, ed. Frederick Johnson (Austin and London, 1972), p. 65.

84. Quoted from Wittfogel's unpublished introduction to the second volume of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*, which he never completed.

85. Wittfogel, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas*, p. 410.

86. Wittfogel, "Die Theorie der orientalischen Gesellschaft," *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung* nos. 1-2 (1938), p. 119.

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but by the state (as the "dominant agent" of production), the resulting class structure, although antagonistic, cannot result in a class struggle because of the power of the state.

Wittfogel's discovery suggests that leadership in the affairs of a given society depends on a number of factors. The historically conditioned "actual" natural foundation plays a primary role, as does the technical and organizational ways in which man secures his subsistence. But ecological and economic circumstances, though essential, are insufficient to determine societal order and the character of the ruling class. The organizers of production are not necessarily the leaders of society. Supremacy depends also—and sometimes predominantly—on the manner in which a society's general regulative tasks are executed. Thus not only wealth (the control over things) but also power (the control over persons) rests on more than the management of production.

But the dominant bureaucratic state did manage production in China. And just as this state was able to control agricultural labor, so it was able to control the country's industrial development.[87] The guilds remained weak and the Asiatic state, while favoring the growth of trade, sharply restricted the power of the traders. As long as the Asiatic mode of production remained dominant in China, capitalism in its Western form—as specified by Marx and Weber—could not develop. The major factors involved in the penetration of industrial capitalism in China were the Asiatic state and the influence exerted by foreign capitalist-imperialist states. China's "Asiatic" capitalism was as different from Western capitalism as was the Asiatic mode of production from the feudal mode of production. Wittfogel concluded that any analysis of the origin and development of industrial labor and the labor movement in China had to answer two questions: How had China's "industrial proletariat" (and "industrial bourgeoisie") been led to accept modern forms of industrial production, and how had elements which were external to China's main source of production been grafted onto its Asiatic-despotic form? In his answers to these questions, Wittfogel pointed out that whereas Western capitalism had developed independently and from below, "Asiatic" capitalism had been initiated externally (by Western capitalism) and from above (the Asiatic state). Also, China was entering the modern industrial world at a time when Europe and the United States were in the stages of "middle" and "late" capitalism and this disparity in their developments sharpened the economic and social pressures in China. Wittfogel's main concern, however, was the contradiction between the social roots of the modern Chinese proletariat and their Asiatic milieu, on the one hand, and

87. Wittfogel carried his argument concerning the growth of "Asiatic" capitalism forward in "Die Grundlagen des chinesischen Arbeiterbewegung," *Archiv für die Geschichte des Sozialismus und der Arbeiterbewegung*, vol. 15, no. 2 (1938), pp. 238-269.

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the role of imperialism and the nature of a basically foreign Western industrial capitalism, on the other.

Asking why China did not develop independently (*nicht selbständig*) to industrial capitalism—why China had remained "Asiatic" (stagnant) for two thousand years, Wittfogel proceeded in classic Marxist fashion from an analysis of the material conditions of production—the specific relation between man and nature—to an analysis of the social relations of production. His new concept of the mode of production opened the door to an examination of the institutional structure of bureaucratic (total) power which he would later make in *Oriental Despotism*, where his concept of a bureaucracy as a ruling class would serve not only for an analysis and critique of the agrarian ("Asiatic") despotisms of the past, but also for the industrial (Communist) despotisms of the present.[88]

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88. K.A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism. A Compariative Study of Total Power* (New Haven, 1957). In Antonio Carlo's recent article, "The Socio-Economic Nature of the USSR," *Telos* no. 21 (Fall, 1974), he dismissed Wittfogel's approach to the Soviet system by stating that "Wittfogel has argued that the Soviet system is nothing but a re-run of the old Asiatic mode of production or a hydraulic and agro-managerial society." But neither in *Oriental Despotism* nor in any of his other writings does Wittfogel argue along these lines. He does draw attention to Plekhanov's and Lenin's concern about an "Asiatic restoration" in Russia. Lenin argued that the only "absolute" guarantee against an "Asiatic restoration" in Russia was the success of the revolution in the West. But his three "relative" guarantees were no bureaucracy, no army and no police. Lenin lived to see the failure of the Western revolution, and when he saw the old bureaucracy being restored and the growth of the army and the police, he believed that a restoration of "the Asiatic system (*Asiatschina*)" was in progress. Wittfogel takes off from this point, but he does not end there. The "Asiatic system" involved an agro-despotic system of total power which was represented by a semi-managerial ruling bureaucracy. Wittfogel made it clear that this system disintegrated in the 19th century, as Marx had postulated, under the impact of external factors (primarily military) and that it was in a process of transition from a single-centered to a multi-centered society at the time of the October Revolution. What emerged after this revolution was not a replica of the old semi-managerial agro-despotic functions. The Soviet system, in Wittfogel's view, is related to the "Asiatic system" in the same way that capitalism is related to feudalism. There is a historical and institutional connection, but they are not the same. This has been made clear in Chapters IX and X of *Oriental Despotism*, to which Carlo refers, and also in Wittfogel's articles on Russia, to which Carlo does not refer. Cf. "Russia and Asia, *World Politics*, vol. 2, no. 4 (1950); "The Marxist View of Russian Society and Revolution," *World Politics*, vol. 12, no. 4 (1960); "The Russian and Chinese Revolutions: A Socio-Historical Comparison," *The Year Book of World Affairs*, vol. 15 (1961), published under the auspices of the London Institute of World Affairs; and "Russia and the East: A Comparison and Contrast," *Slavic Review*, vol. 22, no. 4 (1963).

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# *The Dilemma of Labor*

## by Richard Winfield

> *The direct relationship of labor to its products is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production...* When we ask, then, what is the essential relationship of labor, we are asking about the relationship of the worker to production.[1]

With these words from 1844 the young Marx posed the thematization of Civil Society in terms of the reflective structure of consciousness which has been the inadvertent strait-jacket of Marxist discussion ever since. While the specific program of the *Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital* has lain forgotten, egological categories of need and interest, of alienation and defiance have been thrown upon a contradiction of *forces of production* and *relations of production* to give the living proof that quantity turns into quality, just as ice turns to water. *Labor* has become the object of adoration and apology, as that original relation that can never seem to cut through the facticity of history.

All this casuistry and accomodation finds its source in none other than the false problematic which Marx first presents in the *1844 Manuscripts*: the attempt to formulate the concept of *social* production by means of a notion of laboring activity which is itself specified through the reflection of an ultimately presupposed subject.

"The direct relationship of labor to its products is the relationship of the worker to the objects of his production." The negative process of labor *is* identified with the negative process of the laborer; the specification of the product in and through labor *is* a determining grounded in the structure of the laboring individual as a self-conscious subject.

"When we ask, then, what is the essential relationship of labor we are asking about the relationship of the *worker* to production." Not only is the laboring act to be understood as a self-relating of a presupposed individual, but *labor* as a *social* category, constitutive of a system of production, is to be conceived from the absolute starting point of the worker's independent reflection upon his circumstance.

*Labor* as *alienated*, *labor* as epistemological category, *labor* as irreducible factor beside *interaction*, *labor* as source of Abstract Right, as germ to the opposition of *forces of production* and *relations of production* and of *base* and *superstructure*—these are nothing other than the changing faces of the *aporie* that lies in this program of 1844.

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1. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. Martin Milligan (New York, 1964), p. 110.

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Economics, in the form it has taken as a modern social science, has of course avoided *this* dilemma by simply not facing the problem that lies at the bottom of all of Marx's considerations of labor. Instead of investigating labor in the constitution of modern society, economics has taken work as informed by reflection and carried through this formalism to its limited end. For in modern economics production has been excluded from social theory in the true sense of the word, and been reduced to a sphere of technique, manipulated by the *ratio* of the self-determining individual who *finds* himself beset by need and given relationships between men. Here Capital can be nothing more than the instrument ruled by the entrepeneur and serviced by the worker. The process of production is a calculable, rational one, where objects are subdued in a causal procedure.

Kant has provided the framework for this conception. He writes that economics, whether of the household, agriculture, or the state, cannot "be reckoned as practical philosophy. . . For all these contain only rules of skill (and are consequently only technically practical) for bringing about an effect that is possible according to the natural concepts of causes and effects, which, since they belong to theoretical philosophy, are subject to those precepts as mere corollaries from it (viz. natural science) and can therefore claim no place in a special philosophy called practical."[2] He has had the consequence to recognize that when the *Faktum* of Freedom is taken as the basis of human praxis, any occupation with the satisfaction of need through labor must stand outside the relatedness of individuals to each other as free selves, and merely express a response to the bond of the empirically conditioned side of man with the mechanism of external Nature. Because the social objectivity of self-determination is here deprived of any concrete content beyond the formal regulation of the categorical imperative and a civil order hypothetically posited on contractarian lines, the assumed autonomy of Practical Reason must exclude from its domain all reference to the heterogeneous particularity of both needs and the activity securing their satisfaction. From this standpoint labor can only be a means for an individual, completely external to a person's existence as a free being, and to his *social* (*sittliche*) relations with other men.[3]

As a result the whole sphere of economic life can be nothing but a factual collection of technical procedures whose animating source is to be found in the arbitrarity of the self-determining, and therefore indeterminate, individual. In place of a concept of Civil Society, we are left with an empty formula. Max Weber gives it its classic, most bare and honest form: "We shall speak of economic action only if the satisfaction of a need depends, in the actor's judgment, upon relatively *scarce* resources and a *limited* number

2. Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J.H. Bernard (Hafner, N.Y., 1951), p. 9.

3. Thus Kant describes "work, i.e., as occupation which is unpleasant (a trouble) in itself and which is only attractive on account of its effect (e.g., the wage)," *ibid.*, p. 46, and that "In *work* the occupation is not pleasant in itself, but is undertaken for the sake of the end in view." Kant, *Education*, trans. Annette Churton (Ann Arbor, 1960), p. 68.

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of possible actions, and if this state of affairs evokes specific reactions."[4]

The entire Marxist discussion begins by rejecting this reduction of production to the conscious application of technologies in relation to need. The task now becomes one of realizing labor as a social process. And in the *Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital* this general program takes its *final* determinate form as a concept of the System of Needs of Civil Society,[5] that specifically modern reality in which for the first time the process of production is freed from the household and natural conditions, to emerge as an independent sphere of social interaction in which the private self-seeking individual as such becomes. This is a realm where labor has its definiteness and actuality in the self-distinguishing *of capital*, instead of in relation either to anthropological assumptions of man's relation to nature, or to some presupposed notion of self-consciousness. For the *Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital* reveal precisely how production is socially determined as a reality constituted by nothing other than capital's self-developing *intersubjective* process.

Yet before this *solution* is reached, Marx gives us that attempt which remains caught in the standpoint of reflection at the same time that it reaches for a concrete social theory. The predicament of Marxism has been defined by the apologetic acceptance of that inconsequent problematic and by the complete ignoring of *how* Marx has specified labor as a social reality in the *Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital.*

In order to come to the real achievement of Marx, it is first necessary to clear away the false notions of labor that have dominated Marxist discussion, beginning with the original formulation of 1844. On this basis it is then possible to recognize the fundamentally intersubjective framework from which Marx is finally able to determine the concept of Captial.

The *1844 Manuscripts*' concept of alienated labor serves as a point of departure for the subsequent Marxist discussion which has been unable to actually grasp the labor process as a social reality. This is due not so much to its early origin, as to the radicality with which it demonstrates how the attempt to understand the system of production upon the basis of the determining of a presupposed self-consciousness directly leads to the actual annulling of any notion of society or of the individual.

The drama of alienated labor is this open contradiction that falls victim to its own inability to coherently unite the opposition from which it begins. This is the factually discovered opposition of labor as *objectification* to labor as *alienation*.[6] Here we have exposed the fatal dichotomy of an act of labor

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4. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Roth and Wittich (New York, 1968), Volume I, p. 339.

5. This, capital's sphere of social interaction, is first thematized in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* under the heading, "The System of Needs" (paragraphs 189-208).

6. Marx writes "We have accepted the *estrangement of labor*, its *alienation*, as a fact, and we have analyzed this fact." *Op.cit.*, p. 118.

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determined in complete indifference to any social contest whatsoever and the social fact of the private appropriation of the product of labor.

The first moment is *labor* as such, that original *praxis* in which self-consciousness achieves its concrete reality independent of a system of social relations. The standpoint of reflection is constituted in this practical creating of an objective world[7] whereby "Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. . . . Through and because of this production, nature appears as *his* work and his reality. The object of labor is, therefore, the *objectification of man's species life*: for he. . . contemplates himself in a world that he has created."[8]

That such an absolute self-positing can be realized in this way is problematic enough. For on the one hand, the laboring act would seem to already depend upon the *existence* of the subject and an objective world. And on the other hand, the product of labor can neither constitute the totality of objectivity (for even the laborer in his own *existence* stands *beside* it) nor contain within its own determinateness the negative process of its creator.[9]

Yet even accepting Marx' claim that *labor as objectification* is constitutive of self-conscious freedom, the insolvable problem remains of how this autonomy is to be limited by the social form of appropriation and transformed into a state of *alienation*. This second moment demands that the *fact* of capitalist property relations somehow negate this unlimited self-affirmation in the labor process at the same time that it maintains the worker's standpoint of reflection within his productive act. For *alienated labor* is based upon the individual's *recognition* of *himself* as alienated.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

9. Lukács claims to find in Hegel the precursor of such a concept of *labor*. Referring to both the *Jenaer Realphilosophie* and the *Science of Logic*, he writes that "With Hegel, the concrete analysis of the dialectic of human labor sublates the antinomy of causality and teleology, i.e., it reveals what concrete position consciously purposive human action occupies within the entire sphere of causality, without bursting this sphere apart." *Der Junge Hegel* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1967), p. 428. And further, "In this way the mechanistic separation of theory and practice, which Kant's and Fichte's subjective idealism had worked out, was sublated, and an objective connection between human practice and objective reality was established." *Ibid.*, p. 437. What Lukács fails to recognize (as is also the case with Habermas in "Labor and Interaction") is that in Hegel's discussion the negative process of the laboring individual is itself a *moment* in the self-development of the intersubjective structure of *Spirit*. Lukács turns this relation around, and falsely claims that "The laboring human being is precisely. . . the primordial phenomenon of the identical Subject-Object, of Substance becoming Subject." *Ibid.*, p. 589.

Habermas, on the other hand, attempts to formalize Marx's theory of social production according to the schema of the objectification of labor that appears here in the *1844 Manuscripts*. Making reference to Fichte's absolute Ego, Habermas claims that "only in its process of production does the species first *posit* itself *as* a social subject." *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (Boston, 1971), p. 39. At the same time, however, he affirms that not only is the system of social labor "always the result of the labor of past generations" (p. 39), but that "the absolute ego of social production is founded in a history of nature that brings about the tool-making animal as its result" (p. 41). These *conditions* naturally destroy the absolute autonomy at the basis of any authentic self-positing.

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The way in which Marx attempts to make these contradictory moments coincide is by simply annulling all social relations within the capitalist form of production and substituting relations of force and domination that still must leave the autonomous individual somewhere to be found.[10]

Here the worker has no subjective relation *to* the capitalist, but rather "The worker exists as a worker only when he exists *for himself* as capital."[11] The laborer is in his self-affirming praxis only when he is already a dependent moment, the property of the capitalist.

On the other hand, the capitalist has no relation to the laborer as a person, for he is "the *governing power* over labor."[12] The labor of the worker is thus "forced labor."[13] "The *estrangement of man* from man"[14] is here so complete that it seems foolish to speak of any *social relations* or of any *society* whatsoever, for even the presupposed mediations of property and exchange are themselves immediately annulled when the *Person* is treated as a *Thing* (*Sache*).[15]

The worker's very entrance into the labor process contradicts these foundations of his ruling master. In order for the subjective reflection of the

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10. This reduction of capitalist social relations to forms of external violence is immediately based on an inability to understand that the laborer is the free owner of his labor power, which he sells to the capitalist as any other commodity. The individual of Civil Society is in principle *not* propertyless, if only on the basis of his absolute right to distinguish his capacity to work as *his* commodity. The *Grundrisse* and *Capital* systematically develop this point, thereby refuting the theory of proletarian revolution basing itself on the propertylessness of the worker that Marx first states in the *Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right."*

11. Marx, *op.cit.*, p. 120.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

15. Habermas is one among many who take this conceptual confusion as proof that bourgeois society contradicts its own pressuppositions. In *Strukturwandel der Oeffentlichkeit* he claims that "the maintenance of the sphere of commodity circulation and social labor...[is possible] only through the exercise of force" (Neuwied and Berlin, 1971), p. 152, because, as Marx is alleged to have discovered, modern society is "a class society, in which the chances of the social ascent from wage-laborer to property-owner become ever slimmer... First of all, what are obviously lacking are the social presuppositions for the equality of opportunity, that everyone with ability and 'good luck' be allowed the status of property-owner and thereby qualify to become the private individual of public life. This public life, which Marx sees himself confronting, contradicts its own principle of universal accessibility" (pp. 151-152). What Habermas has done is to once again forget that the wage laborer is a member of Civil Society, a man of recognized need and will, and owner of at least the commodity which is his labor power. Habermas has also confused the principles of self-determination within the System of Needs and the sphere of Abstract Right by not distinguishing between property and commodity relations, something that Hegel first systematically does in the *Philosophy of Right*.

Shlomo Avineri is entirely incorrect when he claims that Hegel shares the viewpoint that Habermas here advocates. Hegel does not in principle affirm that property is the dissolution of the Abstract Right. Avineri says as much when he writes that "since property is basic to Hegel's view of the person, poverty becomes for him not merely the plight of people deprived of their physical needs, but of human beings deprived of their personality and humanity as well." Cf. his *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 136.

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individual to still be tied to his laboring activity, he must give himself up as a Person when he gives his labor up to Capital. Marx describes this impossible situation when he says that "the worker has become a commodity."[16] Somehow the entire subject of the laborer is supposed to be bought, and yet he is the one to sell himself! And even though the worker here exists for others as a mere object (which contradicts the form of contract through which he becomes capital's property), he still somehow maintains his independent perspective within the labor process, so that "the object which labor produces—labor's product—confronts it as *something alien*, as a *power independent* of the producer...his labor...exists *outside him*...and...becomes a power on its own confronting him."[17] How this conscious awareness over and against the product can be is mystery enough, for this arrangement of production would seem to exclude the very *objectification* by the worker himself which in principle constitutes the coming to be of his own reflective standpoint. The product stands as the property of the capitalist, and the laboring act serves capital instead of positing the autonomy of the worker. This entire relation of alienated labor presupposes the self-consciousness of the worker at the same time that his situation should be annulling it! Yet if the worker does have the intuition of himself in the objectivity of the product to begin with (through the moment of *objectification*) how can this be limited by *anything* external?

Marx would like to say that this whole construct nevertheless holds itself together as a system of production which exists in the form of a contradiction. He writes that "Labor, the subjective essence of private property as exclusion of property, and capital, objective labor as exclusion of labor, constitute *private property* as its developed state of contradiction."[18] It should be seen, however, that little subsists at all when the subjectivity of the worker and his relatedness to the given form of private appropriation cannot in themselves be coherently formulated. As long as the act of labor is unable to unite both these moments in its own specification, social production is an empty phrase. The "developed state of contradiction" contains little more than the affirmation that the *objectification* in the labor process is fundamentally indifferent to the capitalist relationship within which it should emerge. The problem is that Marx has here stood firmly by the standpoint of an irreducible reflection and nonetheless attempted to elevate the labor process above technique to the level of the becoming of freedom.

Only when he leaves behind the conception of *externalized society* and *alienated labor* is Marx able to approach the problem of Civil Society. This he does in the *1844 Manuscripts* in describing none other than his ideal of *communist* society. There "the individual *is the social being*.[19] ...Man,

16. Marx, *op.cit.*, p. 65.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

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much as he may therefore be a *particular* individual...is just as much the *totality*—the ideal totality—the subjective existence of thought and experienced society for itself [20]...They relate themselves to the *thing* for the sake of the thing, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man [21] ...Indeed, his own sensuousness first exists as human sensuousness for himself through the *other* man."[22] What is loosely described is that System of Needs within which the labor process *is* a social relation constitutive of what Marx here calls the species being and what Hegel calls the private man of Civil Society. It must remain a beyond for Marx as long as he remains unable to determine the process of production as an intersubjective, fundamentally social relation, and not as an egological fact of life subjugated to a particular set of 'social' circumstances.

The extreme form of the failure to conceive social production that is expressed in the *1844 Manuscripts'* concept of *alienated labor* should not obscure the perseverance of this dilemma in the would-be "historical" discourse of the developing contradiction of the forces of production and the relations of production which appears to have replaced Alienation as a central theme in Marx' later works.

One of the earlier statements of this problematic is found in the 1848 writing *Wage-Labor and Capital.* Here it does seem that the very starting point of the analysis is the recognition of the unsolved task of the *1844 Manuscripts.* Marx writes: "In the process of production, human beings work not only upon nature...In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations to one another, and only within these social connections and relations...does production take place."[23]

Yet the generality of this principle, its indifference to the historical emergence of the private individual and to the specific task of the thematization of Civil Society indicates its weakness. This becomes clear in its unfolding in the classic doctrine which Marx here expresses in these words: "the *social relations within which individuals produce, the social relations of production, are altered, transformed, with the change and development of the material means of production, of the forces of production. The relations of production in their totality constitute what is called the social relations, society, and moreover, a society at a definite stage of historic development, a* society, with peculiar, distinctive character."[24]

Although the stated distinction of *relations of production* from *forces of production* avoids all explicit reference to the role of the individual laborer, Marx has here reproduced the reduction of the laboring act to a

20. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
23. Marx, *Wage-Labor and Capital*, trans. Harriet E. Lothrop (New York, 1902), p. 35.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

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determination of technique that nonetheless must of itself affect the structure of social relations within which it *is*.

The forces of production are dead objects whose process is entirely external to them. They are determined as productive instruments only in and through the so-called relations of production which in turn are themselves relations *of production* only by containing these forces as a mere object. The *development* of these forces can take place only from outside of them, through none other than the agency of the so-called relations of production. Yet Marx has separated one from the other, reducing both to things essentially specified from without. Only a presupposed self-consciousness existing beyond both of these "things" can provide the unity which allows *forces of production* and *relations of production* to stand side by side in relation with each other and together constitute the foundation of society. Because neither moment contains within its own determination the *emergence* of the other and their opposition, which would allow both to exist as distinguished moments of a whole, the system of social production *is* only through the subjective act of our investigator —Deus ex machina Karl Marx. In themselves neither the *forces of production* nor the *relations of production* can specify a *social* form of production, for the one is a mere instrument, a technique devoid of a social reality in its isolation and difference from relations of production, and the other is a formal set of relations that are somehow unable themselves to specify the material act of production. The social unity which should be differentiating itself into these two opposed moments is simply not to be found.

Inevitably, when it comes time to transform the empty quantitative change in the forces of production into a *determining* of a set of relations of production, Marx must pull consciousness out of a hat to break through the indifference of number.[25] The contradiction of *forces of production* and *relations of production* becomes a threesome. For if a social process is now to be salvaged, then "three moments, the forces of production, the state of

25. The "dialectical" use of the transformation of quantitative into qualitative change in Marxist discussion is well refuted by Lukács, quoting from the section "Nodal Line of Measure Relations" of Hegel's *Science of Logic*: "...the reduction to quantitative terms must affect not only the basic elements of the process but also its individual stages, and the fact that this procedure makes it appear as if a gradual transition were taking place, goes unobserved. But this gradualness only applies to the externals of change, not to their quality; the preceding quantitative situation, infinitely close to the succeeding one yet possesses a different existence qualitatively... One would like to employ gradual transitions in order to make a change *comprehensible* to oneself; but the gradual change is precisely the trivial one, it is the reverse of the true qualitative change. In this gradualness the connection between the two realities is abolished—this is true whether they are conceived of as states or as independent objects; it is assumed that...one is simply external to the other; in this way the very thing necessary to *comprehension* is removed.... With this growth and decay are altogether abolished, or else the In Itself, the inner state of a thing prior to its existence, is transformed into *a small amount of external existence* and the essential or conceptual distinction is changed into a simple, external difference of magnitude.'" *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), p. 162.

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society, and consciousness, can and must come into contradiction with one another."[26] Of course it is only the latter, consciousness, that is able to "solve" the contradiction.

The dilemma is just as great when the relations of production are themselves opposed to a legal and political Superstructure whose Ground they are supposed to be. The "Preface" to *A Contribution To The Critique of Political Economy* gives the most famous expression to this theory. Marx here explains that "The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life,"[27] and when the forces of production transform the relations of production, so has an entire world been born.

Yet because the "totality of these relations of production...the real foundation" does not contain in its own determinateness the emergence of the opposition of itself to its *superstructure*, the correspondance between the two is an empty external accomodation that has nothing to say about the necessity of their interrelation or what they may be in themselves. With every social phenomenon the mere *expression* of the *relations of production*, neither the limits of the totality of society, nor the determinate and necessary differentiation of this whole into its distinct elements can be grasped. Once again an independent consciousness must introduce itself to claim that the given *is* a relation of *base* and *superstructure*. As Hegel writes, "it is a dead halt, which does not of itself go beyond itself, and proceed to a new content; it has to get hold of something else from somewhere or other in order to have once more a content...In that this reflection does not even have its own negativity as its content, it is not inside actual fact at all, but for ever away outside it."[28]

The oppositions *forces of production—relations of production, base—superstructure* are both empty schemas unable to give themselves a content.[29] Each presents a pair of determinations indifferent to each other within their opposition. The conditioning of one element by the other can offer nothing as to the nature of each in itself.[30]

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26. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, ed. P.J. Arthur (New York, 1970), p. 52.
27. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (New York, 1970), pp. 20-21.
28. Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J. B. Baillie (New York, 1966), pp. 117-118.
29. "A table of contents is all that understanding gives, the content itself it does not furnish at all." *Ibid.*, p. 112.
30. For this reason, Marx is never able to actually spell out how forces of production and relations of production are to be distinguished from one another. It often appears that the former may be the production process itself (including the organization of labor) and that the latter is the set of "property" relations corresponding to this arrangement. Yet such a distinction can hardly maintain itself when the organization of production is constituted in and through the intersubjective relations embodied in commodity ownership, exchange, and so on.

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Historical process becomes a mysterious sequence in which the relations of production commune with the *superstructure* in an unspeakable way. And the system of *social* production is itself just as much an enigma, for here *no* concept can be given to constitute the labor process in its own determinateness *as* a social relation.[31] Technique has fallen outside of intersubjectivity, and Marx' political economy has become its own annihilation, a fate that Kant, for one, would call well-earned.

Although *alienated labor* is no longer the specific form in which the labor process is determined through an individual self, the distinction of *forces of production* from *relations of production* has maintained the same self-defeating dependence upon an external consciousness in order to bring together the transforming of Nature and human interaction *as* a social process.

To break through this problematic bondage to a presupposed standpoint of Reflection,[32] Habermas has tried to lead the Marxist discussion of production

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In the *German Ideology*, Marx gives model statements on this hesitating tautology. At one point he writes: "The various stages of development in the division of labor are just so many different forms of ownership, i.e., the existing stage in the division of labor determines also the relations of individuals to one another with reference to the material, instrument, and product of labor." *German Ideology*, p. 43. At another time: "Division of labor and private property are, moreover, identical expressions: in the one the same thing is affirmed with reference to activity as is affirmed in the other with reference to the product of the activity." *Ibid.*, p. 53. However, as the capitalist system so clearly demonstrates, the division of labor just as much specifies the relation to the product as the relation of commodity ownership lays hold of the laboring activity itself.

31. Hegel describes the general methodological problem of this construction as follows: "according to this way of working each determination, each mode, can be applied as a form or schematic element in the case of every other, and each will thankfully perform the same service for any other. With a circle of reciprocities of this sort it is impossible to make out what the real fact in question is, or what the one or the other is. We find there sometimes constituents of sense picked up from ordinary intuition, determinate elements which to be sure should mean something else than they say; at other times, what is inherently significant, viz. pure determinations of thought—like subject, object, substance, cause, universality, etc.—these are applied just as uncritically and unreflectingly as in everyday life." *Phenomenology of Mind*, p. 108.

32. Although such an attempt would seem to abandon epistemology as such, Habermas still feels ready to discuss labor as an historically mediating epistemological category alongside the instrumentarium of *labor* and *interaction*. In *Knowledge and Human Interests* he suggests a transcendental structure of experience where the "forms are categories not primarily of the understanding but of objective activity; and the unity of the objectivity of possible objects of experience is formed not in transcendental consciousness but in the behavioral system of instrumental action. Nevertheless, the matter that is given is first shaped in the labor process as in the cognitive process" (p. 34). It is really only the latter phrase that maintains any sense through Habermas' argument—that *labor* merely offers a given stuff to thought, without itself being a moment in the constitution of knowing. For we hear that "The system of objective activities creates...the transcendental conditions of the possible objectivity of the objects of experience" (p. 28), or better still, that "what provides the material that reflection is to deal with in order to make conscious rules basic synthetic accomplishments is not the correct combination of symbols according to rules, but social life processes, the material production and appropriation of products" (p. 31). It should be clear that the process of reflection itself remains entirely independent of the supposedly historical mediation of *labor*. Indeed the content of the ensuing knowledge may depend upon the particular facticity of the material

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to the level of Hegel's *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, where labor, language and reciprocal recognition are factors in which self-consciousness can first become thematized and through which a self-differentiating structure of society is able to constitute itself.[33]

However, in opposition to Hegel, Habermas is unable to conceive any immanent relation between the dialectic of Representation and labor and that of Reciprocal Recognition. As a result, both are set indifferently beside each other as irreducible principles.[34] On the one side stand language and labor as self-objectifications of an individual who is independent of any context other than the subject-object relatedness of consciousness.[35] And on the other side stands Interaction, conceived without any relation to a social world, and merely representing the reciprocal recognition of two individuals as constituted from out of the dialogical self-reflecting of each individual upon the other.[36]

Habermas takes these two elemental relationships as those factors from which Hegel has been able to determine the *Ich* as the identity of the universal and the particular, and further recognizes that the possibility of a theory of social production rests on the grounding of these factors within a self-determining unity that is not the self-consciousness which they are to thematize, but rather that unity which Hegel has called *Spirit* (*Geist*).[37]

It is this relatedness that Habermas seeks to formulate by specifying a social structure that unites labor and interaction without subjugating one to the

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offered by this or that labor process, but the formal nature of this epistemological knowing (where the reflective relation of Subject-Object is still the absolute starting point) remains necessarily ahistorical and independent of *labor* itself.

When Habermas claims that "the objectivity of the possible objects of experience...is equally binding on all subjects that keep alive through labor" (*ibid.*, p. 35), he is offering no more than a customary consensus and not a transcendental structure of knowing. Furthermore, the labor in question is a completely ahistorical form. He admits this, calling *labor* "the invariant relation of the species to its natural environment, which is established by the behavioral system of the instrumental action" (p. 35).

33. Habermas does this most explicitly in the essay "Labor and Interaction" (in Habermas, *Theory and Practice* [Boston, 1973]).

34. *Ibid.*, pp. 161-162. It is true that Habermas does speak of a *language* as the presupposition of both labor and interaction (*ibid.*, p. 158). However, he does not take any notice of the successive emergence of labor and interaction in the *Jenaer Realphilosophie* itself, and progressively allows the acknowledged priority of language to drop from sight.

35. "The dialectic of representation and of labor develops as a relation between a knowing or an acting subject on the one hand, an an object as the epitome of what does not belong to the subject on the other. The mediation between the two, passing through the medium of symbols or of tools is conceived as a process of externalization of the subject—a process of externalization (objectification) and appropriation." *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

36. "In contrast to this, the dialectic of love and conflict is a movement on the level of intersubjectivity. The place of the model of *externalization* is therefore taken by that of *separation* and alienation, and the result of the movement is not the *appropriation* of what has been objectified, but instead the *reconciliation*, the restoration of the friendliness which has been destroyed." *Ibid.*, p. 164.

37. Habermas claims that "it is the dialectical interconnections between the linguistic symbolization, labor, and interaction which determine the concept of spirit." *Ibid.*, p. 143.

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other. Characteristically, however, Habermas cannot determine the system of production as the sought after structure of mediation.[38] He instead opposes the dialectic of *social production* to that of the *class antagonism* just as he had set *labor* against *interaction*, thereby reproducing the same dichotomy at another level.[39]

When finally Habermas does come to formulate the mediating unity of *labor* and *interaction*,[40] he is unable to determine it without identifying it with interaction itself.

One of the most obvious examples is when Habermas claims that Hegel later preserves the unifying structure of *labor* and *interaction* that is first developed in the *Jenaer Realphilosophie* only in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*'s relation of *Lordship* and *Bondage*. This relationship, which should integrate the two irreducible factors of labor and reciprocal recognition in an identity constitutive of *Spirit*, is *as a whole* nothing other than the structure of *interaction* which constitutes *itself* in and through the *moment* of *labor* that is here introduced only as a result of the ensuing confrontation of *Lord* and *Bondsman*. Hegel openly contradicts Habermas' notion of the absolute indifference of *labor* and *interaction*, and also explicitly states that the process of *Lordship* and *Bondage* is still an abstraction from *Spirit*, and in no way constitutes a *society* within which the person is individuated.[41]

Outside of this unfortunate reference, Habermas offers only two other suggestions for the social reality which must accomplish the unifying task of *Spirit*: Cooperation *within* the labor process and, above all, Abstract Right.

Cooperation, however, as *distinct* from the system of production, cannot

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38. Nonetheless, he *still* writes that "Marx...sees their connection effected in the system of social labor. That is why 'production' seems to him the movement in which instrumental action and the institutional framework, or 'productive activity' and 'relations of production,' appear merely as different aspects of the same process... Marx starts with the premise that work always takes the form of social labor." Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, pp. 53, 326.

39. Habermas writes: "Unlike synthesis through social labor, the dialectic of class antagonism is a movement of reflection. For the dialogic relation of the complementary unification of opposed subjects, the re-establishment of morality, is a relation of *logic* and of *life conduct* at once." *Ibid.*, p. 58. The uniting structure for these two elements turns out to be nothing other than conscious experience! For several pages later, Habermas declares that "social theory, from the viewpoint of the self-constitution of the species in the medium of social labor and class struggle, is possible only as the self-reflecting of the knowing subject." *Ibid.*, p. 63.

40. Without any explanation Habermas stops mentioning the independent role of *language* and discusses labor as if its *externalization* would comprehend that of language. And later he seems to combine interaction and language by reformulating the relation of labor and interaction as one of instrumental and communicative action.

41. See the introduction to Chapter VI—"Spirit"—of the *Phenomenology of Mind*. It is also to be noted that when Habermas describes the emergence of the system of production in the *Jenaer Realphilosophie*, the immediate source is a form of interaction alone. He observes that "subjective spirit goes over into the sphere of actual spirit only after the struggle for recognition has led to a system of social labor and to emancipation from the state of nature." Cf. *Theory and Practice*, p. 187.

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itself contain the determining of the act of labor, but merely state an external application of *interaction* upon *labor*.[42]

Abstract Right, on the other hand, is treated as a *social* reality that still falls outside the constitution of the system of production. Habermas wants to show that Abstract Right is the existing bond of *labor* and *interaction* that nonetheless emerges from out of the productive process. "Possession as the substrate of legal recognition arises from the labor process. Thus instrumental action and interaction are linked in the recognized product of labor."[43] However, when Habermas attempts to describe the *positing* of Abstract Right, and the uniting of *labor* and *interaction* within it, he is forced to retreat from all notions of a system of production, and ends up having *labor* create Abstract Right, which itself exists as a form of interaction alone.[44] For when he uses the term *social production* (*gesellschaftliche Arbeit*) to designate the creator of Abstract Right, it is still nothing other than the *objectification* of *labor* that is to account for this *social* relation![45]

Yet *how* the determination of *property* and the *Person*, the immediate forms of Abstract Right, in anyway depends upon the worker's self-objectification within the labor act, or even upon an existing *social* process of production, must remain a mystery. Habermas can only make the familiar claim that through some sort of *institutionalization* the repeated exchange of produced commodities gives birth to the *Person*. Such *normatization* (*Normierung*), however, would indicate an introduction of some Deus ex machina in order to prop up an Abstract Right that is deficient because it does not contain its own *administration* and *is* merely *abstract*.[46]

The real problem here concerns the very possibility of discussing relations of *property*, *Person*, and *contract* at the level of *actual Spirit* (*wirklicher Geist*), and not alongside, or even including, the "irreducible" principles of *subjective Spirit* (*subjektiver Geist*): *labor* and *interaction*.[47] Even accepting

42. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, p. 326. It is to be noted that in *Das Kapital* cooperation appears as a specific *moment* in the self-development of the concept of capital.

43. Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, p. 159.

44. And it is on this basis that Habermas intends to criticize Hegel's distinction of Abstract Right and Civil Society, writing that "although right determines the form of social intercourse, it is introduced from the *outside* under the title of jurisprudence. It constitutes itself independently of the categories of social labor, and only *after the fact* enters into its relationship with the process to which, in the Jena lectures, it still owed the moment of freedom, as a result of liberation through social labor." *Ibid.*, p. 167.

45. "Abstract Right documents a concrete liberation: for social labor is that process in which consciousness makes itself into a thing, in order thereby to form itself into its own proper form..." *Ibid.*, p. 128.

46. "Thus the relation of reciprocal recognition, on which interaction is based, is brought under norms by way of the institutionalization of the reciprocity established as such in the exchange of the products of labor." *Ibid.*, p. 160.

47. "Subjective Spirit" and "Actual Spirit" here refer to divisions within the *Jenaer Realphilosophie* that do not correspond to the levels of subjective and objective Spirit in the *Encyclopedia*, but rather represent early formulations approximating Hegel's discussion of Abstract Right and Ethical Life in the *Philosophy of Right*.

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that Habermas has somehow made clear a distinction between *labor* and *social production*, the question remains of how the system of production can maintain its own structural claims when within its sphere Abstract Right is born. For the standpoint of the *Person* presupposes the abstraction from commodity relations as such, which in this case would mean the dissolution of the world whose living process would contain Abstract Right, as well as signify the return to the relatedness where Nature is a mere *Thing* (*Sache*) and the individual a mere independent will.

Habermas comes to this quandary because he is unable to make the pre-social relatedness of *labor* and *interaction* moments in a process which brings itself to the determinateness of Civil Society. Although he recognizes the necessity of overcoming all reference to a presupposed knowing self in the construction of a genuine theory of social production, Habermas' initial exclusion of *interaction* from *labor* leaves him in that tradition that has kept the process of *Das Kapital* outside of Marxist discussion. Because he is unable to systematize social production without reference to the "principles" of *subjective Spirit*, Habermas is equally unable to distinguish commodity relations from those of Abstract Right. The attempt to pose the *Person* as the immediate result of the productive process only expresses the failure to conceive that individuation which is in and through Civil Society.

Nevertheless, for all its inadequacy, Habermas' discussion of *labor* and *interaction* does have the virtually unique distinction of at least having posed the problem of specifying social production in terms of intersubjective relations. If Marxist discussion is to raise itself above the prevailing false notions of labor, it must come to the *Grundrisse* and *Das Kapital* with this problem before it. For when Marx' determination of capital can be grasped as the specification of a self-informing sphere of interaction, whose every aspect owes its determinateness to capital's intersubjective distinguishing and not to any external pre-social reflective standpoint, then and only then will production be secured a truly *social* determining.

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# NOTES AND COMMENTARY:

## *A Concept of Subjectivity: Comments on Jacoby's* Social Amnesia[1]

by Robert D'Amico

Of all the lines between the theoretical work of Marx and Freud there is one that rests literally on the surface. Both continually reworked the "mode of presentation" of their discoveries. While in Marx it was the endless revisions and false starts that lie behind *Capital*, that have now become accessible with the publication of the *Grundrisse*, in Freud it was the constant recourse to "models" or "metaphors" which would, in their totality, somehow grasp this new phenomenon. So mind is a city being excavated, a mystic writing pad, a theatre, a censored newspaper, a system of inscriptions. The point is that both struggled with a field, with an inquiry, that passed beyond the theoretical vocabulary available and that imposed on both thinkers the need for reflection on the production of theory. A reflection directed upon the inherited categorical schemas so as to open up a new discourse. The problem is that this kind of theoretical labor leaves a thinker vulnerable to reduction and simplification. The hesitations and reworkings are ultimately turned into an excuse to ignore the problems, to obliterate the differences that a theory can only indirectly point to. Revision is always the movement toward simplicity, it is always the short-cut to systematization, closure and sclerosis. It is this juncture between the degeneration of both Marx and Freud in the hands of their continuators that Jacoby is sensitive to. The presupposition of *Social Amnesia* is that we can decipher, precisely through the mutilation of the theory, what was the critical content of both Marxism and psychoanalysis that caused an immediate abandonment and capitulation to ideology. Jacoby's point is that this abandonment is social, it is a purge of the disruptive, the critical, the negative through their literal erasure from consciousness. An amnesia of social mind.[2]

Jacoby has provided us with a concrete study of an ideology in formation. How an ideology occupies a field, transforms it by draining all the content of its discoveries and filling them with the rediscovery of repression. The esoteric, the confusing is comfortably replaced by the common-sensical—that which co-exists with its object. *Social Amnesia* concerns the development of ego psychology after Freud, the conversion of psychoanalysis into a privatized cosmetic for "personal" problems and the subjective narrowing, the trivializing of Freud's discoveries, even in the hands of "radical" therapists. Jacoby's targets are numerous—both the professional and the self-assured "specialist" perpetuating an emaciated skeleton of Freud's works held up by the dogmatic aversion to complexity, as well as the "hip" young rebels, confident of Freud's obsolescence and out to replace his conservatism with a novel radicalism which

1. R. Jacoby, *Social Amnesia: A Critique of Conformist Psychology from Adler to Laing* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974).

2. The leitmotif for Jacoby's book is the phrase "All reification is a forgetting." The English translators of Adorno and Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* commit the Marxist equivalent of a Freudian slip by translating the phrase "all objectification is a forgetting," thus confirming the statement in their error.

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will distance them once and for all from the tangles of the past. Their divergence on the surface conceals a deep convergence toward domesticating psychoanalysis in the name of repressive social relations.

What Jacoby demonstrates is that starting with Adler a process was begun in which the ego was normatively defined and cut off from sexuality, the unconscious and the libido so as to be assimilated to "normalcy" and trained to accomodate, to make a "healthy" adjustment. This process was continued, under the guise of radicalizing psychoanalysis, in existential therapy, encounter groups and self-help therapy. The difference between these efforts was only a "tactical" ideological one, that is, from the conservative and normative concepts of ego health to the libertarian and personal-privatistic ego health that is sold by the current culture merchants. The difference is social and rests on the impossibility of maintaining the Adlerian ego in the midst of the objective whittling away of autonomous subjectivity. Once the "subject" had become completely defined and occupied by ideology all that was left was the authenticity of its intense fragmentation. In this way subjectivity surfaces everywhere, it is the virtual locus of ideological domination precisely as it proclaims its autonomy and independence.

"That a political left and non-left participate in the same drive toward subjectivity, that both suffer from social amnesia, is proof only of the virulence of society, not the meaninglessness of political distinctions... The rejection of theory and theorizing is grounded in the affirmation of subjectivity. Theory seems politically impotent and personally unreal and distant. Only human subjectivity—the personal life—is meaningful and concrete" (pp. 102-103).

I suspect that it is precisely this core of Jacoby's argument, connected to his proposal of a non-subjective or objective theory of subjectivity, which will most easily be ignored or misunderstood. While no one is going to jump up in the defense of Adler, and Laing and Cooper may even have already suffered from the "familiarity breeds contempt" of intellectual fashions, Jacoby's arguments are a challenge to those who have turned to subjectivity or spontaneity as a revitalization of Marxism. The point is, though Jacoby does not discuss this, that the issue divides those coming from the same tradition—whether Lukács, the Frankfurt School or Sartre. The inheritance of these critical traditions in Marxism is clouded today by the realization that the indulgence of subjectivity and its intensification may be the most powerful weapon of false consciousness in advanced stages of capitalism. Thus there can no longer be any "naive" invocations of the "subject" or the "unity of the personal and the political" without a theory of subjectivity that is not in the grip of immediacy.[3] The mediacy of

3. Indeed the controversial aspects of Jacoby's essay "The Politics of Subjectivity," as it appeared in both *Telos* and *New Left Review*, was the challenge it directed at what had become a dogma of the new left—the viability of a politics based on spontaneous subjective opposition to culture. It seems to me that Jacoby raises doubts not only at the level of tactics but further as to whether this has not already been ideologically co-opted by the culture industry. This notion of the subjective enclosure is argued, for example, in Trent Schroyer's advocacy of this type of politics. "This type of praxis will produce a politics of individuation which is the only way in which *choice* can be regained by communicative processes. Only in this kind of politics can personal experience be raised to the level of interpersonal expressions and become the beginning point of political organization. This has already begun in the numerous movements that resist the cultural hegemony of late capitalist society, as, for example, black liberation, women's liberation, and the many types of communal 'enclosures,' such as free schools." *Critique of Domination* (New York: Braziller, 1973), p. 223.

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reflection would lead to a *concept* of subjectivity which is the issue in the rest of this piece.

The ideology that Jacoby studies in *Social Amnesia* is an ideology of the subject: it is a fetishism of both consciousness and the ego. Freud's discoveries did not take the subject as given but were an inquiry into a functionally different domain, the unconscious, and treated consciousness (or subjectivity in general) as a formative process. It is for this reason that "ego psychology" had to revise Freud and transform psychoanalysis. Their conformism was rooted in an unmediated concept of the ego which substituted the ideological "images" of stability and adjustment to knowledge of the object. Jacoby follows three levels of conformism in psychology through the book—the question of therapy, the question of the ego or subject and the question of theory. Revisionism in neo- and post-Freudians is characterized by making therapy the central concern, in the form of adjustment, accomodation and adaptation, with the ego viewed as self-contained, self-regulating and profoundly asocial (both the unconscious and libido are vulgarized as either vestiges of Freud's obsolete metapsychology or retained only after having been drained of their critical content). Theory is consequently replaced by utility, the common-sensical and the pragmatic, so as to facilitate both adjustment and ego health. It is in the face of this ideological complex that Jacoby renews the call for a non-subjective theory of subjectivity at the base of a social psychology within Marxism. "The spiritualities of the conformists, the blind materialism of the behaviorists, the superficial humanism and confused existentialism, the rampant subjectivism: these are the elements of a consciousness that no longer coheres. In this situation, critical theory is loyal to its content: critique and theory, negative psychoanalysis and a non-subjective theory of subjectivity. It resists the lure of the immediate which becomes irresistible as society hardens and rigidifies; and it works to preserve its alienation from alienated society" (p. 150).

Mediation, reflection and the concept are the connected paths, in dialectical thought, from which objectivity emerges. A *concept* of subjectivity is a mediated, reflected *object* of knowledge—it has its dimension of objectivity in the movement through which it is grasped as a concept. "To bring subjectivity to objectivity entails teaching it how to speak about that which it bespeaks: society and history. Such an effort is an objective theory of subjectivity" (p. 80). In this sense the concept should not be confused with subjectivity as a material object itself, either in the sense that it is thought that therefore the concept *is* subjective (because it is a concept of subjectivity) or that the concept of subjectivity shares the same material aspects as subjectivity itself. For example, the first confusion leads to a misplace concreteness, namely the illusion that a preoccupation with the personal and private is more real, more concrete since it is so immediately related to the subject's experiences. In this sense the theorist is accused of having a *concept* that no longer concerns the individual's private experiences, that is too *distant* from one's self. The second confusion leads to a collapsing of the concept into its object, as in the tired criticism that since Freud studied the middle class in Vienna his concepts must be treated as equally time-bound.

Jacoby takes pains to emphasize, against the crude historicistic rejections of Freud, that what we mean by a conceptual grasp that is materialist and critical is precisely that it no longer reflects, in the passive sense, the circumstances of its birth. The working out of conceptual mediations always points to contradictions and possibilities, which is the true mark of concreteness. "Freud's subversiveness is derived from his concepts and not from his stated political opinions. This disjunction is

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absolutely crucial to recognize: the disjunction between the political, social and truth content of concepts and the political-social outlook of those using the concepts. They are not identical; they often stand in contradiction" (p. 25).

All of this would entail, I think, a rejection of introspection as a means to this concept since a theory of subjectivity would explain rather than rest on the manifest appearances of subjectivity. By introspection I mean the belief that the "mechanisms" of subjectivity are internal to the subject. Freud's discovery is that the subject must lead beyond the domain of consciousness, either toward biology or social psychology, for his answers. Turning inward the subject confronts a "theater of illusions" manifesting themselves as private and coherent in their immediacy (aside from sudden, uncontrollable "slips"). It is precisely by breaking with an empiricist concept of the subject that Freud was able to open up the *formation* of the subject as a field of inquiry—in which civilization was rediscovered "like a garrison in a conquered city." This subjectivity is an *effect*, it is produced and that it why what theory must investigate is a non-subjective dimension. Freud's radicalism was that he pursued this non-subjective dimension back to society and not merely biology.

"If Freud was 'conservative' in his immediate disregard of society, his concepts are radical in their pursuit of society where it allegedly does not exist: in the privacy of the individual. Freud undid the primal bourgeois distinction between private and public, the individual and society; he unearthed the objective roots of the private subject—its social content. Freud exposed the lie that the subject was inviolate; he showed that at every point it was violated. The neo- and post-Freudians, enthusiastic as they were for the individual or person, did not dig into these categories; rather they were spellbound by their surfaces."

What would constitute then a concept of subjectivity as mediationally complex, "distant" from the fetishized self-reflective images produced within the subject and objective in the sense that "subjectivity is pursued till it issues into the social and historical events that preformed and deformed the subject"? What follows is a provisional and schematic attempt which seems to encompass the implicit complex of themes emphasized by various critical approaches to Marx and Freud. Subjectivity is not a simple datum, a homogeneous given, but a complex whole "preformed and deformed" by labor, language and desire.

Labor—It is the area in which alienation and therefore subjectivity emerge in both political economy and philosophy in the 19th century. In material exchanges with "nature" and with other men, man, in Sartre's words, "objectifies subjectivity and subjectifies objectivity." Theories of labor are thus theories of recognition in that labor forms the material ground for intersubjectivity. The formation of the subject rests then on the type of organization of social interaction and the character of the "material exchange" with nature. The socially imposed domination of labor through the intersubjectivity of necessity, need, scarcity and preservation alsor eveals that labor is the *self-assertion* of objective subjectivity—the emergence of self-consciousness.

Language—For the 19th century, and in Hegel and Marx, language is still tied to recognition, intersubjectivity and social being. Thus Hegel can draw the connection, "For it is in the name alone that the distinction of the individual from every one else *is not imagined but is actually made.*"[4] Further money and language were seen in their

4. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J.B. Baillie (New York: Harpertorch, 1967), p. 533. Emphasis added.

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affinity as exchange and alienation. Again Hegel, "The form of utterance which supplies wealth with the sense of its own essential significance, and thereby makes itself master of it, is likewise the language of flattery; for what it gives out to be the essential reality, it knows to be a reality... *at the mercy of others.*"[5] This view disappears until linguistics returns to the problem of semantics and pragmatics in communication with the expansion of semiology. In 1930 Volosinov writes, "Signs also are particular, material things; and, as we have seen, any item of nature, technology or consumption can become a sign, acquiring in the process a meaning that goes beyond its given particularity. A sign does not simply exist as a part of reality—it reflect or refracts another reality. Therefore, it may distort that reality... The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another. Wherever a sign is present, ideology is present, too. *Everything ideological possesses semiotic value.*"[6] Therefore another dimension of the subject is its *signifying practice*—which opens up the field of symbolic practice as objectifying subjectivity, in myth, rite or literature. Again there is a dialectical nature to these mediations when it is remembered that precisely through such a signifying practice (the dream text—which leads to the study of pathologies in communication) Freud was led to the workings of desire, another mediation. Just as Freud saw the connections between libido and the material necessity of labor so the deep link between words and money would allow Saussure to use political economy as an analogy for the linguistic sign.

Desire—As "alienation" haunts the emergence of subjectivity in the 19th century so it is also a form of the term used to designate the place in which man keeps madness apart from sanity. But the images of madness return in the works of human imagination when they express the contradictions of human desires: passion and death, sadism and masochism, slavery and mastery, insolence and humiliation. It was in this hidden continuity of normalcy and abnormalcy that Freud discovered the objectivity of desire, its "autonomy" from the ego. Much as in the Hegelian theory of recognition, the subject finds himself only in the other and the locus of desire in Freud is the Other (the unconscious). It is the Other that constitutes a dialectic of intersubjectivity; it is the realization that human desire is the desire of the Other. We are not the rulers of our desire, we desire what the other desires we desire.

Lacan's theoretical work has been an effort to draw a connection between the theory of desire in Freud (read through Hegel) and the theory of the signifier, which explains how the unconscious operates. Lacan's point is that desire is not represented by an object, since it is not the need for an object but for self-recognition, but by a "signifier" (the phallus or the "name-of-the-father"). Lacan's effort is deeply conservative and scientistic in terms of its understanding of psychoanalysis but this theoretical rereading did entail a critique of neo-Freudianism. Recently Juliet Mitchell, who appropriates a Lacanian position to defend psychoanalysis against the feminist critiques, has extended this to Laing and Reich by concentrating on the theory of desire. Her point against both Laing and Reich is that psychoanalysis can be maintained in its traditional therapeutic form through a symbolic-structural understanding of desire as recognition. "Desire is the desire to have one's desires recognized—it is the yearning for recognition. Desire can thus be recognized but never satisfied, for, as the desire for

5. *Ibid.*, p. 540. Emphasis added.
6. V.N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (New York: Seminar Press, 1973), p. 10.

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what the Other desires, it necessitates the wish to *be* the other one... (it is) the lack of an object which in itself provides the very genesis of desire... It is in expressing symbolically the essential 'lack' that the phallus features. The phallus is not identical with the actual penis, for it is what it signifies that is important."[7]

Again we see the interconnections between these levels of subjectivity's *objectifying practices*—the *mediations* that determine the subject. These practices as alienation, recognition and objectification constitute the object of knowledge, the *concept* of subjectivity. But they only cohere in their interconnections, taken alone each mediation leads to reductionism. This is why Jacoby keeps emphasizing that "radicality" in both Marx and Freud is the refusal to restrict the inquiry into the subject at a single level. Freud's discovery of the function of desire is also an inquiry into social repression, or conversely, Marx's recognition of labor is within *praxis*, signifying, symbolic activity, and not merely material interaction. Again there is a convergence in the "revising" of Marx and Freud since the simplification is always depoliticizing. Once the subject is dissolved into labor or flattened into a normative ego it is the formative process, the basis for understanding subjectivity, that is ideologically distorted.

The human sciences seem fated to proceed in a *negative* manner constantly intertwining knowledge with the obstacles to knowledge. The problem is that the limitation to the human sciences lies within its object: it is man himself. Thus the concept of subjectivity is inseparable from and bound to those conditions in which man enslaves and emancipates. It is because of these struggles that as an object of this knowledge it will never simply and immediately stand apart from ideology. It is in this spirit that *Social Amnesia*, by way of conclusion, leaves its inquiry open. The questions that now can be raised presuppose a critical theory. How much is Freud's conception that phantasy "narrates" the prehistoric family, as found in that "theatre of a myth" the Oedipus complex, entangled with the complicity between desire and ideology in capitalism? Also the analysis that Jacoby does on the question of the relation between theory and therapy with regard to Laing is not, in my opinion, a problem solved in Freud. Foucault has argued that the medical positivism was already a part of psychoanalysis because of the connection between the asylum and the clinic as medical institutions. Might this ambiguity at the origins of psychoanalysis give positive political significance to anti-psychiatry movements even if, as in the case of Laing, they are theoretically disappointing?

Jacoby ends his book with a reference to Attica—that naked image of confinement and repression—and it appropriately provides the other side to the symptom of social amnesia. Oppression can never be obliterated from social mind and speaks of itself even under enforced silence. That persistent "memory" seems to provide a context for the following quote from Foucault's study of social confinement. "One might say that the fortresses of confinment added to their social role of segregation and purification a quite opposite cultural function. Even as they separated reason from unreason on society's surface, they preserved in depth the images where they mingled and exchanged properties. The fortresses of confinement functioned as a great, long, silent memory."[8]

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7. J. Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Pantheon, 1974), p. 396.
8. M. Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, trans. R. Howard (New York: Plume Books, 1965), p. 209.

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# *False Premises*

## by Jean Cohen

The Marxist vision of a radically revolutionary proletariat carrying out an historical task of emancipation has not been fulfilled. As is well known, the proletariat of the most highly industrialized capitalist country, the United States, has never formed itself into a revolutionary class. Moreover, the 'proletarian revolution' of the Soviet Union was led and consolidated by a Leninist party that has created a system of domination characterized by a dictatorship of the party not only over the class, but over the entire society. Stanley Aronowitz's *False Promises*, written by a Marxist in painful awareness of this history, poses the question of why the proletariat has not fulfilled its task of emancipation.[1] This book is important because it is the first attempt, after the Frankfurt School's move away from Lukácsian philosophy, to return to the philosophical and sociological orientation of Lukács. It presents both a social history of the failure of the American working class to become revolutionary, and a theory of praxis for the future (through an appropriation of the concept of reification). In addition, it tries to take into account the new factors of modern capitalism (the new division of labor, mass culture, state interventionism) by abandoning the dogmatic conception of the industrial proletariat and by critically drawing from Frankfurt School theories (especially from Marcuse) while rejecting their pessimistic conclusions. Thus, *False Promises* is an important new attempt to analyze both the past inability of the American working class to achieve, and its present possibilities for developing, revolutionary class consciousness (Preface, p. xl).

However, by posing the problem of the disappointing performance of the proletariat in terms of its failure to develop revolutionary consciousness, Aronowitz precludes a more fundamental investigation that would begin to examine both the genesis and grounds on which the original theory of the revolutionary proletariat was based, and which would be possible only through an immanent critique of the Marxian theory itself. Like the works of Lukács and the Frankfurt School, *False Promises* covertly presupposes both Marx's critique of political economy and the class theory that is tied to it. While he attempts to go beyond Marxism in light of empirical changes in modern capitalism, by avoiding an immanent critique of Marx, Aronowitz is forced in the end to reintroduce many of the dogmas he hoped to overcome. The result is that although Aronowitz is able to perceive important empirical developments in modern capitalism that would have to be accounted for by any new critical theory, he is unable to draw the theoretical and practical conclusions that these changes imply. By clinging to aspects of the Marxist analysis, Aronowitz is prevented from asking whether it was the

1. M. Glaberman in his review of *False Promises* (*Liberation*, February 1974, pp. 38-42), bemoans the answers Aronowitz finds to this question which portrays workers as coopted victims and locates the roots of revolt only in the young (blacks, women and students). To this Glaberman opposes the all too familiar arguments about the centrality of the working class due to its material production, and the importance of transforming the workplace in any social revolution. Thus, he returns to the industrial working class and attacks Aronowitz for implying its insufficiency as a revolutionary group. While Glaberman's dogmatism is uninteresting, he does grasp a central contradiction of *False Promises*—it insists on the notion of the working class while it identifies only non-working class-specific groups with radical needs. I see the former as problematic, while Glaberman objects to the latter.

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theory of the proletariat that was faulty rather than the proletariat who failed. The following will attempt to show the limitations of an approach that merely reformulates the original categories in light of empirical changes (especially the notion of the proletariat), and to point to an alternative that must begin with a self-critique of the Marxist theory.[2] In short, my critique is both methodological and substantive: while historical changes (e.g., the emergence of new social strata) cannot refute Marxist theory, attempts to alter, expand, or unfold the original categories to encompass new historical content do not suffice to save or vindicate it.

The theory that informs and provides the basic philosophical orientation for Aronowitz's book is Lukács' theory of reification. Aronowitz accepts neither the Leninist thesis that limits worker spontaneity to the attainment of trade union consciousness, nor the voluntaristic arguments that attribute the reformism of the workers' movements in this country to the perfidy of the leaders of unions and leftist parties. In addition, his reliance on Lukács enables him to see the limits of the more recent labor-analysts (such as Bracher and Terkel) who point to the long history of spontaneous struggles by American workers but "... fall short of explaining the failure of the working class to emerge from its odyssey of strike movements and insurrectionary actions with a social tradition and political culture of its own."[3] To Aronowitz the permanence of protest and struggle in working class life is undeniable so long as workers perform alienating labor in the service of capital—their very position in production gives impetus to an incessant and unresolvable struggle with capital for control over the workplace. The unanswered question, however, given this unavoidable conflict, is: What are the forces at work which prevent the emergence of revolutionary class consciousness?

The answer offered in *False Promises* is based on a questionable version of Lukács' reification thesis. Following Marx, Lukács pointed to the fetishism of commodities as both the fundamental force militating against class consciousness and the crucible for the dialectical emergence of this consciousness. The commodity form structures social relations into quantifiable and calculable but nevertheless opaque economic relations between things. Social relations of domination are concealed under the guise of equivalence exchange, and reified into naturalistic economic forces independent of the will of the individual. However, for Lukács, as for Marx especially in the *Grundrisse*, the transformation of human relations into thing relations that replaces former relations of immediate personal dependence, creates the objective possibility of a new form of human life, free of domination. While from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie, the antinomies of reification appear as static, for the proletariat, reification becomes the dynamic of the emergence of its class consciousness.

Lukács attempts, but fails, to further specify this possibility in terms of the categorical movement of the commodity labor power.[4] Aronowitz, though, does not

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2. Aronowitz's book is not the only one of its kind. There are attempts in both France and Germany to reformulate and alter aspects of the Marxian concept of the proletariat in light of empirical changes but without criticizing the original theory and in the hopes of saving the theory of revolution and class struggle in its broad outlines. Cf. A. Gorz, *Strategy for Labor* (Boston, 1966), passim; and O. Negt, A. Kluge, *Oeffentlichkeit und Erfahrung. Zur Organisationsanalyze von bürgerlicher und proletarischer Oeffentlichkeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

3. Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises* (New York, 1973), p. 6. (Hereafter referred to as F.P.).

4. Cf. Andrew Arato, "Lukács' Theory of Reification," *Telos* 11 (Spring 1972), pp. 25-67.

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seem to comprehend this two-sidedness of the Lukácsian concept of reification. He praises Lukács for showing that explanations for the absence of class consciousness must be sought within the production and circulation of commodities. He also realizes that Lukacs extended the fetishism of commodities thesis into a full-fledged theory of reification arguing that with the development of capitalism, the commodity form penetrates other spheres of society, imparting to all social relations the same abstract and opaque character. Through a Marx-Weber synthesis, Lukács rediscovered the importance of spheres other than the economy in the reproduction of the capitalist system (Weber), noticed the formal similarities of the structures of these spheres (law, science, the state), and argued for the primacy of the economy (Marx) insofar as it provides the structuring principle for all of them—commodification.[5]

Aronowitz, however, is slightly off the mark when he interprets the generalization of the commodity form to other spheres of society to mean simply that everything becomes an object of sale. For this formulation misses Lukács' more profound insight into the similarity of *structure* of the apparently independent spheres. The point is not, as Aronowitz has it, that even works of art and science become commodities for sale and thus that all of society takes on the aspect of one big market. Rather, the point is that the distinct spheres become structurally similar insofar as they all take on the form of 'second nature,' develop a logic of their own, independent of the intentions of the individual and as such reproduce internally the *commodity form* and fetishism. However, Aronowitz does rely on one side of Lukács' reification thesis in a general way insofar as he argues that the extension of the commodity form to cultural and political spheres of life serves as a powerful preventive to the development of class consciousness.[6] Thus, it is precisely a study of the reified institutions affecting the worker—the family, schools, religion, mass culture (and here Aronowitz goes further than Lukács)—that must be undertaken, for these institutions mediate between the social elations of production and individual consciousness.[7]

But Aronowitz's uncritical and one-sided acceptance of the reification thesis leads him into difficulties. While it implies the necessity of a critique of spheres of society other than the economy, the other and neglected side of the reification theory works only through a panlogistic, teleological solution to the problem of class consciousness. To be sure, Lukács succeeded in overcoming the past-present reductionist teleology of the philosophy of history of the orthodox Marxists, by arguing that the economy is primary only in liberal capitalism and that past societies must be studied in terms of other, more specific formative principles. But he reintroduces the teleology into a present-future continuum by insisting that since the commodity form is generalized into the structuring principle of society as a whole, its dynamic implies the emergence

5. *Ibid.*, and cf. Jean Cohen, "Max Weber and the Dynamics of Domination," *Telos* 14 (Winter 1972), pp. 63-87.

6. For Lukács, however, the primacy of the economy holds true only for the period of liberal capitalism. When all spheres of society are actually reified, a period of transition comes into being wherein, to be sure, the logic of the economy has been impressed upon the other spheres, but paradoxically enough the crisis tendencies of the economy itself have abolished the primacy of this sphere, opening it to political intervention. Lukács tends to see this intervention primarily as a revolutionary one, though this argument can be adapted to a state capitalist thesis.

7. F.P., p. 10. The adaptation of the reification thesis leads Aronowitz to study the other spheres of society primarily to unearth their integrative functions. Far from seeking the dynamic tendencies of the various spheres, he performs a sort of muckraking operation that is a bit too one-dimensional.

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of *a single revolutionary* subject that will liberate all spheres through its self-liberation. The logic of reified categories is thus supposed to make the future of humanity transparent. In short, it is assumed that the industrial working class will develop, according to the logic of the wage labor-capital relation, into a revolutionary class. And the search for mediations that allow for the development of the requisite class consciousness (of their class interest) is not significantly extended by Lukács beyond the sphere of labor. The logic of the economic contradictions is collapsed into the dynamic of their overthrow.

But it was Lukács' own dogmatism (understandable in his own time), *rather than the inherent logic of the reification thesis*, that led him to identify the revolutionary subject as the proletariat. The reification thesis alone can be taken to imply that the various spheres of society will evoke various radical protests in the form of many different groups—women, consumers, students, etc. It need not limit itself to the industrial proletariat. However, with its assumption of a single logic, the reification thesis does imply that the struggles of the various spheres are "objectively" the same and must be unified in view of long-term interests by *a* subject. Lukács, by clinging to the notion of the *industrial* proletariat, is led to the Leninist party as the self-conscious community carrying universal class consciousness that the proletariat cannot for the moment itself attain. The party represents the interests of the class as a whole (revolutions) over and above the particular needs of sections of it. Without the dogmatism of the *industrial* proletariat, however, as long as one maintains a single underlying logic of all the reified spheres—a logic unclear to the human individuals of these spheres—the reification thesis would still imply a party—albeit some form of mass party. This is so because even if one could argue for the possible spontaneity of self-constitution of radical groups in various spheres around their needs, an agent of unification able to totalize the struggles of the different spheres would be required. In other words, the party would have the task of embodying the general interests not simply of the class, but of all struggling groups in society. The mass party would be open to rebels in all spheres of society, and would unify them against the oppression of the commodity form that denies them the possibility of developing a totalizing consciousness on their own.

Thus, the theory that Aronowitz relies upon logically leads to conclusions that he abhors—the necessity of a party. He himself vehemently rejects the choice of a party that would either serve to unify the class, embody its class consciousness, or organize its strategy, on the grounds that a radical revolutionary subject must be self-educated and self-determining. (He is also well aware of the conservative political outcome of party politics.) But, and this is the important point, both the notion of a single reifying logic structuring all spheres of society, and its correlate—a single subject of revolutionary action emerging to challenge it (a redefined proletariat), adopted from Lukács by Aronowitz, point to a party. Ironically, then, the moral stand against the necessity of a party is challenged by the analysis in *False Promises*. Aronowitz himself moves back and forth between the two positions open to Lukács: asserting the primacy of the working class as a revolutionary agent, while arguing for the importance of other spheres and the struggles of other groups. The problem of unification, posed at the end of his book, is never really solved. As we shall see, Aronowitz offers a new synthesis that avoids none of the old problems. His notion of the contemporary working class broadens the concept of the proletariat to encompass all radical groups without really avoiding the problem that this new 'subject,' too, must be unified.

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Marx and Hegel are the two other guiding philosophical lights for *False Promises*, but they, like Lukács, are interpreted in a one-sided and misleading manner. Aronowitz bases his hopes for the proletariat on the Marxian notion of 'labor' as 'objectification.' It is, of course, legitimate to argue that the category of labor as the production and expression not only of objects but of human relations, capacities, and needs as well, is a focal point for Marx's theory of the proletariat. From the notion of 'labor' as 'objectification,' Marx certainly develops the crucial category of alienation, as well as the focus on production and the critique of political economy. But the development of the theory of the proletariat can hardly be grasped through Aronowitz's hasty summary that culminates with the statement: "Marx argued that the modern proletariat was the only class capable of achieving freedom because it alone transformed nature through social production."[8] Such misleading formulations abound in *False Promises*. Marx's argument about the potentialities of the proletariat is a bit more profound than that. But, to be fair, Aronowitz's analysis, drawing on Kojève and Marcuse, does include an attempt to ground the notion of 'labor' and 'objectification' philosophically in Hegel's lordship-bondage section of the *Phenomenology* and to locate the revolutionary potential of the working class therein. Aronowitz argues that Marx's position was elaborated by "following the themes developed by Hegel." But his eagerness to equate Hegel's analysis to Marx's reinterpretation of it leads him to vulgarize both of them. He states that: "Just as Hegel pointed out, the position of the lord, even if it appeared dominant, was actually subordinate to that of the bondsman because only the bondsman should appropriate the object, nature, into self... While lordship desired the recognition of the bondsman as a condition of its existence, the bondsman was truly autonomous since its labor constituted true freedom."[9] To be sure, Hegel's analysis at a superficial first glance does imply superior developmental possibilities on the side of the bondsman for transcending the relation of domination insofar as the bondsman can potentially attain a degree of self-consciousness through self-recognition in the forming, shaping of his object. But nowhere does Hegel say that the lord is *subordinate* to the bondsman, or that the bondsman *is truly autonomous since its labor constituted true freedom*. The absurdity of this interpretation is not overcome with the insistence that Marx went further than Hegel in arguing that the proletariat (bondsman) must overthrow the entire relation of domination to be free.

The overemphasis on the subject-object dialectic of labor in New-Marxist-Hegel-interpretations (e.g., Marcuse, phenomenological Marxism, etc.) is the source of such statements. But, as Jürgen Habermas has shown, it is possible to avoid this position by returning to Hegel and recovering a crucial moment in the development of self-consciousness—the dynamics of recognition. Unlike Marcuse, Habermas insists on retaining the distinction between the logic of recognition and the dialectic of labor. First, it must not be forgotten that Hegel's chapter on self-consciousness does not end with a resolution to the master-slave relation of domination by virtue of the dialectic of labor of the slave. For, Hegel's concern in the section on self-consciousness is, in part, to unfold its transcendental prerequisites—mutual recognition between free and autonomous interacting subjects. What the bondsman attains through self-recognition *in his product* is perhaps a higher form of the outcome of 'desire,' the first level of

8. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
9. *Ibid.*

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self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology* in which, through *obliteration* of the external object, the self-identity of the subject is restored. The bondsman, too, obliterates the externality of the object, although not through its annihilation (consumption) but through a recognition that is created by him and therefore identical to him—he recognizes himself in his object. But this form of recognition is not at all identical with mutual recognition of two subjects, for it does not entail the acknowledgement of the bondsman's humanity (or subjectivity) by *another self-consciousness*. Thus, the process remains incomplete, and cannot be concluded solely by the dialectic of labor. This is so because the relation between the bondsman and his object is a subject-object relation, rather than a subject-subject relation.

On the basis of his Hegel-interpretation, Habermas developed a critique of Marx's reduction of the category of 'objectification' to 'labor,' and implicated it as the source of the strong tendencies to linearity in Marxist theory. His critique applies to the meta-theoretical considerations of the Marxian project and especially to the early works, but is not adequate against *Capital*, where the concept of labor (as objectification) is not the ground of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat—this ground becomes the theory of capitalist development itself and its changing internal structure in which the development of labor, of institutions and of struggle are not reduced to one level. Habermas' critique is perfectly sufficient against Aronowitz who, in his attempt to avoid a deterministic reading that might flow from the categorical framework of especially later portions of *Capital*, relies on the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript's* grounding of radical potential in 'labor' as 'objectification.' Habermas, in *Knowledge and Human Interests*, tries to argue for at least two dynamics of objectification that are not reducible to each other.[10] He shows that the process of 'labor' as 'objectification' is based on a subject-object dialectic that involves a mono-logic man-nature relation (homo faber). But, mutual recognition cannot be deduced from this model. Rather, it requires an additional and different logic—a dialogic process involving a subject-subject relation of communicative interaction. Objectification in this sense entails symbolic representation, creation of values, and interaction. Hegel's category of 'spirit' encompasses both moments of objectification—i.e., objectification on a moral and cultural plane as well as products of labor. But the crucial correlate of the dialogic relation of subject to subject is the struggle for recognition.[11] In addition to struggles for control over one's labor and the fruits of labor (the correlate of the subject-object dynamic emphasized by Marxists), there are struggles against forms of institutional domination that imply the absence of recognition and distortion of intersubjective communication. Mutual recognition would obtain, for Habermas, only when all participate equally in the constitution of meanings, values, and institutions of a society. This would demand equal subjects in the context of open communication and an absence of domination. While the logic of labor is one of externalization of a subject, alienation, and the struggle for reappropriation, within the logic of interaction: "The place of the model of *externalization* is therefore taken by a *separation* and alienation and the result of the movement is not the appropriation of what has been objectified, but instead the

10. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, trans. J.J. Shapiro (Boston, 1971), passim.

11. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Praxis* (Boston, 1974), "Labor and Interaction, Remarks on Hegel's Jena Philosophy of Mind," p. 147.

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*reconciliation*, the restoration of the friendliness which has been destroyed."[12] There cannot be a dialogue between man and nature in the same way that there can be one between man and man.

This quasi-transcendental distinction between the two logics of objectification is not solely of philosophical interest.[13] Rather, it is the crux of a critique of a Marxism that became deterministic. For, while it can be argued that Marx's category of labor is broad enough to include both models of objectification, if labor has an irreducible instrumental dimension, the 'rich' concept attained by Marx implies, despite his intention, the introductoin of a heterogeneous instrumental moment into the fabric of communication, and a very possible collapse of communicative to instrumental action, leading to the linearistic formulations of the philosophy of history in *The German Ideology* and *The Communist Manifesto*. (This would also refer to the return to a Hegelian panlogism in parts of *Capital* regarding the dynamic of the present.) Attention is focused solely upon the production process and its dynamic (the dialectic of labor), implying that the development of objective possibilities therein (socialization of labor, etc.) must coincide with the development of subjective possibilities of liberation (development of the proletariat). But there is no automatic developmental relation between labor and interaction and "Liberation from hunger and misery does not necessarily converge with liberation from servitude and degradation."[14] In short, Habermas' position is that the dialectics of emancipation cannot be unfolded solely from the dialectic of labor. Insistence on the distinction bewteen the logics of labor and interaction allows Habermas the flexibility to look to other spheres of society for the emergence of radical protest that can very well be on equal footing, if not more important, than the protest of the proletariat.[15]

While Aronowitz reduces 'objectification' to 'labor' (in the broad sense of production) in his philosophical statements, his political and sociological statements show that he does know better. He, too, recognizes the inadequacy of the orthodox Marxist theory of revolution based on crises and misery. Indeed his focus on *play* as a form of social interaction and possible ground of emancipatory impulses would lead one to conclude that he abandons, implicitly, the limitation of objectification to labor. But he cannot draw the conclusions of his own analysis partly because of his reading of Marx that insists on the primacy of labor, and partly due to his own dogmatic insistence on the primacy of the working class (as laborers par excellence). Moreover, the identification of Marx and Hegel prevents him from seeing the different status of 'alienation' in their works. The historical, almost anthropological status of alienation as part of 'la condition humaine' in Hegel (and Feuerbach) is superceded by Marx's historicization of the concept. In formulations after the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts,* the division of labor, especially that between mental and manual labor, moves to the core of the alienation concept. And it is only in the context of the destruction of community, the emergence of civil society and its fragmented spheres (the economy, the social, the private, the political), the socialization of society and the

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 164.
13. Cf., for a summary of Habermas' philosophical critique of Marx, Albrecht Wellmer, "Communication and Emancipation: Reflections on the 'linguistic turn' in Critical Theory" in *Stony Brook Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (New York, 1974).
14. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Praxis, op.cit.*, p. 169.
15. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).

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distinction of a political sphere, that the division between mental and manual labor and the reduction of the laborer to the status of worker (abstract labor) is fully developed. It is this utterly impoverished (not materially but culturally) position of the worker in the division of labor (and in the absence of community) that constitutes his alienation, and points to the possibiliyt of the development of the radical need for free species activity. The peasant or craftsman do not develop this need, for they endure neither the alienated division of labor nor the lack of community. *The specificity of alienation, then, does not refer to the transformation of nature but rather to the capitalist social form impressed on this process.* And, the possibility of coming to struggle in a radical way against alienation is not based on the struggle for the product, but for the overcoming of alienated labor—i.e., for free species activity (for the first time). However, while this historicization of alienation is a crucial insight on the part of Marx, it does not avoid the Habermasian criticism.

The definition of the working class in *False Promises* reveals a productivist bias, not in the sense of limiting radical potential to those who produce surplus value, but in the broader sense of insisting on the privileged position of those who *produce* (goods or services) to attain self-consciousness and make a radical revolution. "The working class as here defined is composed of those engaged in the production and distribution of material goods and services who do not own or control the object of its labor or its uses."[16] With this definition, Aronowitz challenges the two-class model of orthodox Marxism according to which society is divided into propertyless workers and capitalists. He contents that while correct in its broad outlines, this model does not constitute an adequate theory of class because it forgets that many who work for salaries are not part of the working class due to their dependence on the corporate form of economic organization (managers), and that there is an underclass that does not participate in production and does not fit into the category of 'reserve army' because it is not a threat to working class interests. One must remember that this is presented as a critique of *orthodox* Marxism, for it does not challenge Marx's class theory that anticipated both the development of a managerial strata and technological unemployment.[17]

Our interest, however, is in the status of Aronowitz's definition of the working class. It is, of course, purely descriptive. But at the same time it is tied to certain philosophical assumptions (rooted in the concept of objectification), that point to a potentiality for revolution rooted in the transformation of nature, alienation, and the position of implicit power of producers (if the proletariat refuses to work, the system that depends on its labor must collapse). But important dimensions of the original class theory of Marx are missing here. In fact, the theoretical weakness of *False Promises* comes from its attempt to employ categories that seemingly go beyond Marx without first carrying out an immanent critique of Marx's own work. The result is that Aronowitz is unable to free himself from the hidden assumptions and ultimate conclusions of the theory he hopes to transcend. For Marx, the theory of the proletariat is hardly descriptive—rather it functions on several levels of analysis: philosophical, structural, sociological, and cultural. While we cannot go into detail here, it is important to unfold the various levels of the class theory, partly to reveal what is missing in *False Promises*, but also to avoid misinterpretations of the thrust of

16. F.P., pp. 11-12.
17. Cf. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III (New York, 1970), pp. 338-442.

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this article. For our purpose is not to set up Marx's class theory as the ideal that Aronowitz should have attained; rather it is to point to the shortcomings of *any* theory that attempts to locate revolutionary subjectivity solely or primarily in the proletariat.

Marx first arrives at the proletariat through a philosophical critique of Hegel's resolution to the problematic of civil society (its fragmentation, particularisms, and inequalities). Hegel's notion of the bureaucracy as a *universal class* that rises above the petty concerns of civil society (by virtue of its superior education and privileged position as guardian of public interest), and reconciles its divisions is rejected by Marx. Convinced that the bureaucracy is a false universal concerned with its own particular interests (careerism), Marx projects the proletariat into this position, arguing that it, rather than the bureaucracy, is a universal class insofar as it is a 'class in civil society that is not of civil society.' The proletariat suffers no particular wrong, but wrong in general. Far from having any particular advantages to affirm as a class, it is totally denuded of privilege, of humanity, of any participation in the heart of civil society (whose principle is property). In rebelling against its dehumanization, it therefore rebels against all dehumanization—against class society in any form. Moreover, the proletariat develops radical needs that cannot be satisfied within the framework of capitalist society, no matter what the content of proposed reforms. In turning to a critique of political economy, Marx enriches the notion of radical needs to mean both negative and positive needs. The development of the notion of objectification by Marx allows him to see the expansion of needs and capacities as a possible source of human enrichment and emergence of a many-sided individuality.

Once the proletariat is identified as a sociologically existing stratum experiencing the alienating division of labor, Marx has to show that this class develops not only the need (and consciousness) to overthrow the conditions of its oppression, but also positive needs for an alternative. To do this, Marx introduces a new level of analysis that seeks to provide the concrete laws of motion of the sociological, and the objective possibilities of the philosophical dimensions of the class theory—i.e., he turns to a logical, categorical level of analysis. It is in *Capital* (and the *Grundrisse*) that this level of analysis moves to the center of the theory. I am referring to the development of the categories of the value theory in the form of a critique of political economy that yields a logic of capitalist development. This logical level of analysis, however, is not identical with the structuralist interpretation of the late Marx as having founded a scientific theory, because the logical model based on the value theory is a *critique*. For, the value theory and its categorical unfolding (that constitutes the thrust of the analysis in *Capital*) is, to be sure, made internally consistent by Marx, but at the same time it no longer has the same status or function as in political economy (Smith and Ricardo). While it theoretically can comprehend movements in the economy *'en gros'* (i.e., dynamics of investment, flow of labor, etc.) it cannot account for prices or profits quantitatively. Instead, the labor theory of value as unfolded by Marx acts as a first level of (theoretical) defetishization of market mechanisms and ideology that, through the concept of surplus value, is the link to a deeper defetishization—class constitution and conflict. As such, it is a critical theory that is neither science nor philosophy. It unfolds the contradictions of capitalism on a logical level, with the task of pointing to the objective possibilities of capitalist development and to the potentialities of wage labor to challenge that development.

It is telling that *False Promises* seems to ignore this level of analysis and its connections with the class theory. For Marx reformulates many of the philosophical

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arguments about the radical potential of the proletariat in terms of the critique of political economy and the category of 'wage labor,' while never rejecting his earlier notion of the proletariat as universal class whose self-emancipation will be the emancipation of all. In fact, the wage labor-capital relation (categories of the value theory) moves to the center of Marx's theory: its developmental logic being identical with the logic of expanded reproduction (accumulation), as well as the basis on which the oppositional character of the sociological correlates of the categories (proletariat and capitalist classes) is to be grounded. The self-abolition thesis regarding the proletariat, presented at first in the philosophical form of its exclusion from civil society, is reformulated in terms of this categorical framework—to emancipate itself, the proletariat must abolish itself for the fact of being *wage labor* is the source of its unfreedom.

But it cannot be too greatly emphasized that the logical categories are not identical to their *sociological* correlates—'wage labor' and 'capital' are not identical with 'proletariat' and 'capitalist' classes. Marx did, of course, believe that with the development of capitalism the logical and *sociological* dimensions of class would come together—that the expansion of the wage labor-capital relation would have the sociological correlate of an extension of the proletariat class opposing the capitalist class. Moreover, he assumed that the logic of the category of wage labor sets out the essence of the logic of contradiction and protest to be developed by the proletariat, as the category of 'class interest' demonstrates. (Class interest is the correlate of 'wage labor' and assumed to be the genuine interest of proletarians of which they must become class conscious.) In fact, in my opinion it is precisely Marx's tendency to collapse the logical and sociological (and historical) moments of his own analysis that constitutes a basic problem for his class theory. It was Marx who first distinguished (against Hegel) between the historical genesis and constitutive logic of a system *methodologically* (in the introduction to the *Grundrisse*) and *practically*. His analysis of primitive accumulation shows that the non-capitalist origins of the capitalist system do not reveal or justify the logic of the system itself. But the teleology rejected in Hegel returns in Marx with his panlogistic identification of the logic of the wage labor-capital contradictions with the socio-historical forms of becoming (proletariat and capitalist classes). It returns either through a collapse of the two, or in the form of an essence-appearance dialectic, or in the form of a dialectic of freedom and necessity. (By 'freedom' I do not mean a decisionistic notion of free will, but only that the logic of subjective self-formation moves within the limits but cannot be derived from the different logic of objective structures and development).

Thus, an immanent critique of Marx's class theory points to the unsatisfactory relation between the logical and socio-historical levels on the one hand, and the philosophical level of analysis with both. The tendency to determinism that Habermas identifies through a meta-theoretical critique, I see rooted in the Marxian notion and theory of class as well. According to the philosophical presuppositions and hopes of the theory (emergence of a universal class capable of self-emancipation) Marx must locate radical needs in the designated revolutionary agent—*the proletariat*. But the logical model points only to minimal objective possibilities for this—the need for society (vs. fragmentation), the need for free species activity, and the need for free time are the few correlates of the category of wage labor that Marx locates. And even these are not unambiguously the needs that must emerge as actual, felt needs of the proletariat. If one turns to an empirical analysis of the proletariat as Aronowitz does in the Lords-

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town chapter, one finds perhaps the need for society (association) and free time, but in the satisfiable form of voluntary, religious or union associations, and massified leisure. Moreover, the need for free species activity is reduced to or takes the form of a need for consumption in 'free' time, and for 'meaningful work' in the productive sphere. "Meaningful work" is, as Aronowitz himself admits, not a radical need, but can be met through coopted participation, abolition of the assembly line, etc. Thus, if one moves on the sociological level of analysis of any empirically existing proletariat, one has a hard time reaching either the logically deduced radical potential, correlative of the category 'wage labor,' or the philosophical prerequisites for the emergence of enriched individuals able to create a liberated society through their self-liberation.

Marx's failure to reconcile the various levels of analysis in his class theory and the resultant determinism is not only not overcome by Aronowitz, it is not even noticed. Nor does Aronowitz's avoidance of the logical model save him from its implications. For while he shuns confronting it openly, his insistence on the revolutionary character of the proletariat, despite his inability to locate radical needs or consciousness on its part, implies his covert adherence to the logical model and the collapse of the category of proletariat with that of wage labor.

But let us turn to the actual analyses provided in *False Promises* to see whether the explanation for the disappointing performance of the 'old' American working class, combined with the arguments for radical potentialities of the new one, hold up under scrutiny. When Aronowitz turns to social history, his real talent as a labor historian becomes evident. His analysis of the formation of the American working class—its cultural makeup, its institutions, its forms of organization, and the barriers these presented to its self-constitution as a revolutionary class—is really first rate. He makes short shrift of arguments that ignore the internal structure of the old working class and point to important but insufficient factors such as the open frontier (Turner), Manifest Destiny (Sweezy), or Imperialism (Lenin), as the explanation for the reformism of American workers. To Aronowitz, "It was divisions within the working class that constituted the critical deterrent to the development of a unified working class social and political movement."[18]

The most striking characteristic of the American working class was its immigrant status. By 1880, it consisted of native born artisans occupying key positions in the handicraft industries, Northern European immigrants (German, French, Scotch, Irish and English) possessing definite industrial skills in textiles, iron, mining, Irish and Chinese ex-peasants—unskilled workers, and (after 1880), waves of Southern and Eastern European immigrants (Slavs, Italians, Poles, Hungarians) who were also ex-peasants lacking industrial skills. These latter waves of immigration coincided with the mechanization of American industry and its correspondent increase in demands for unskilled labor. This industrialization process undermined the old artisan's privileged position based on its handicraft skill. It replaced them with a new division of labor with masses of unskilled laborers at one end and, at the other, a new form of skilled labor—technicians, engineers, whose rationalized skills linked to machine rather than handicraft production integrated them into the enterprise and afforded positions of dominance both in terms of remuneration and power over others. The old independent artisan becomes transformed into the supervisor-technician with a superior

18. F.P., p. 140. Cf. also Charles Isaacs' review of *False Promises* in *Telos* 18 (Winter 1973-74), for an elaboration of the merits of Aronowitz's analysis of the American working class.

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position in a hierarchical division of labor but nevertheless subordinated to the imperatives of the machine. While this transformation accompanies any capitalist process of industrialization, in America its uniqueness lay in the fact that the ethnic divisions of the various immigrant groups coincided with the divisions created by the new structure of labor. Northern Europeans became the new skilled strata and southern and eastern Europeans became the unskilled. Thus, the divisions based on skill were compounded with ethnic and cultural differences that made it extremely difficult for the working class to overcome particular differences and recognize its commonality. In order to protect their privileged status, the skilled northern Europeans organized unions (AFL), which were closed to the unskilled southern and easterners, and the ideology of the unorganizability of the unskilled was taken up even by the Socialist Party.[19] Although Aronowitz argues against the 'unorganizability' of the unskilled by pointing to the successes of the IWW, he admits that no group ever came close to initiating a national movement among unskilled workers prior to the 1930s.

Along with divisions of ethnicity and skill were ideologies that reaffirmed them, political divisions, religious forces militating against the development of a unified working class movement. The ethnic nature of urban politics, the ideologies of mobility and achievement, the integrative role of the Catholic church are too well known to repeat here. In addition to these forces were the racial and sexual divisions in the working class that led to the exclusion of blacks and women from both the more desirable jobs and unions, and their use as strike breakers by capitalists. In short, the cultural and social make-up of the working class, and the intense efforts of capital to reinforce whatever divisions existed, mitigated against unification. Moreover, the two fundamental institutions of working class life not directly connected with the work-place—the family and the school—played a similar divisive and integrative role.[20] Moving between Reich and the Frankfurt School, Aronowitz states that while the family is a private institution offering affection and security to its members, it is also the prime source of socialization of prospective workers (children) into the role models and authority structures necessary for unquestioning acceptance of the capitalist system. The family affords adults a refuge from the insecurities and dehumanization of life in the sphere of work, but it is "experienced by children as a microcosm of the arbitrariness of social authority in general."[21] The mother both protects the child and forces it into patterns of conformity necessary for a life of labor in the 'real world.' She shields the child from the father's arbitrary authority, but no one shields her from it, and the obvious hierarchy of power cannot fail to impress itself on the child's mind. Thus, the family presents hierarchy and repression as a natural part of 'growing up.'

The other major agent of socialization of the worker-to-be, the school, plays a similar role. While its ostensible purpose is to provide equal opportunity of education for all, its internal structure even more than the content of the curricula serves to teach virtues required by capitalism—respect for authority, discipline, self-control, etc. In addition, the class structure of society is reproduced in the schools through the

19. *Ibid.*, chapter three, pp. 137-214.

20. Aronowitz does not discuss leisure for the 'old' working class because he argues that "there were only two kinds of time within the continuum of lower class life in 18th and 19th century America: work and sleep." Cf. F.P., p. 70.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

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tracking system. Thus, Aronowitz empirically demonstrates what he argues for theoretically with *his* notion of reification—all spheres of life serve to integrate the worker into the system and mitigate against the development of class consciousness. While this is unobjectionable, so far as it goes, it by no means proves the more important tenet of the reification thesis—that the structures of these various spheres are identical. Lukács can be taken to task for overidentifying the structure of the state and perhaps the sciences with that of the economy, but Aronowitz is on even more shaky ground when he brings in the family, the school, religion, and the like. For the structure of these spheres is certainly not identical to that of the economy—none can be comprehended in terms of the value theory, equivalence exchange, or the wage labor-capital relation. As Habermas and Offe argue, regarding the political sphere, the state is precisely a non-capitalist element that is crucial to the overall reproduction of capitalism but has its own logic, structure, and dynamics.[22] Certainly the same holds true for the family, the school, and religion. Thus while all these institutions do serve to integrate the worker into the capitalist system and are crucial for its reproduction, it is a mistake to confuse their function with their structure. Had Aronowitz avoided this confusion, he would perhaps have investigated the specificity of each sphere (instead of stressing what is generaly the same in all of them) and been able to point to possible dynamics unique to each instead of collapsing the structures of all under the rubric "reification" and the dynamics of all into that of the proletariat.

The best chapter in *False Promises,* "Trade Unionism: Illusion and Reality," offers a critique of the forms of organization of the 'old' working class. It shows how the unions and political parties reproduced the social divisions of the class, internalizing rather than overcoming the limits to unification and radicalization. The critique of the unions operates on both an historical and structural level and is, if not entirely new, extremely well formulated.[23] Historically, the unions reflected and perpetuated the divisions of the 'old' working class along lines of skill, ethnicity, race and sex, despite the ideology of the IWW and the CIO for industrial democracy. Structurally, the unions reproduced the hierarchical division of labor and ethnicity internally in the form of national bureaucracies dominated by skilled, northern European ex-workers. The basic mechanisms for assuring the maintenance of skill and ethnicity adopted by the unions were separate seniority lists, job classifications, and wage differentials. Lastly, insofar as they grew out of the elemental needs of workers for decent wages and hours and out of a desire to share in the expansion of American capital rather than for its downfall, the unions were set up to struggle only for what they could obtain within the capitalist framework as defense organs of the working class.[24] Thus, demands were largely limited to bread and butter issues and excluded questions of workers' control.

Nevertheless, during the phase of liberal capitalism, unions constituted both a real and imagined threat to capitalists. Their repression prior to the thirties was an expression of the inability of individual capitalist firms to accede to union demands for fear of losing their competitive edge. The additional fear of loss of control over the factory once unions stepped in led capitalists to violently oppose unionization and to

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22. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus, op.cit.,* and Claus Offe, *Strukturprobleme des kapitalistischen Staats* (Frankfurt am Main, 1973).
23. Cf. André Gorz, *Strategy for Labor, op.cit.,* chapter two.
24. F.P., p. 257.

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see it as a radical threat. Not until capitalism itself became corporate capitalism could unions be tolerated and even integrated into the corporate structure. But the radical threat of the unions, as history has shown, turned out to be more imaginary than real. And Aronowitz legitimately points to the structure and logic of the unions as the cause of their ultimately reformist tendencies.

As indicated earlier, however, Aronowitz's concern is not limited to presenting a social history of the 'old' working class, but to argue for the radical potentialities of the new proletariat. In the first instance, these potentialities are rooted in the structures of late capitalism that differ from the liberal capitalist framework in which the 'old' working class operated. *False Promises* offers a descriptive picture of basic features of late capitalism in order to locate the historical changes that are the basis for his new class theory. It is characterized by a corporate economy (with a monopoly and public sector that operate above the market), government intervention, and the modern trade union (as a major instrument of class collaboration). Since the New Deal, a close integration of the state and the corporations allows for what Aronowitz calls (but does not explain) state capitalist planning (p. 238). While the state always played a role in organizing American capital, its new role as consumer, replacement of the market, and producer in its own right implies a new situation: "...it reflects the growing convergence of the private and the public, the closing of the gap between the state and civil society, between politics and economics" (p. 270). At the same time, the policies that synchronize the activities between the government and private corporations are also responsible for developing the means to make labor a stable factor of calculation. Through the process of collective bargaining, the unions are integrated into the corporate structure, as it allows workers to organize while limiting the formulations of needs and struggles to calculable wages and hours issues. Unions in late capitalism participate in a sort of class compromise through the process of collective bargaining by restricting the workers to a contract that denies the right to strike during its existence, by instituting a bureaucratic grievance procedure that systematically removes control from the shop floor through mediating experts, and by accepting management's prerogatives over the direction of the labor process (p. 217).

However, we are only offered a few confusing statements as to the implications of the changed relation between the state and the economy characteristic of late capitalism. On the one hand, the argument seems close to both Galbraith and Mills insofar as it points to an 'economization' of the state in the form of a transposition of the goals of the corporation into the public sphere (Galbraith), along with the existence of a distinct political elite (Mills) that emerges despite the interconnections of the military-industrial complex: "The corporations, having *colonized* and subordinated the public sector to their needs, come to accept the operational supremacy of the political elite. In the political elite's hands are placed the tasks of overall planning and coordination of vital investment decisions..." (p. 270, emphasis added). On the other hand, Aronowitz tries to retain a Marxist position, arguing (against Galbraith) that the criterion of profit maximization as the motive of the capitalist economy and state activity remains. (This argument rejects the thesis of a 'technostructure' that replaces capitalist dominance with that of technocratic-technician-engineer planners in the enterprise and in the state, interested not in profit but in growth.)

In addition, Aronowitz takes issue with 'post-industrial' conclusions of Bell and Touraine, claiming that they are unwarranted since there remains the contradiction

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between post-industrial potentials of technology and the perpetuation of authority relations, the division of labor, and hierarchy of industrial society. But Aronowitz confuses Touraine's critical concept of a conflict-ridden post-industrial society with the utopian hopes of overcoming industrialism that Marcuse and Gorz draw from the machine chapter of the *Grundrisse*, referring to the hidden potentiality of late capitalism, a notion based on the replacement of direct manual labor by largely automatic machine systems—a liberatory potential that any modern society based on domination must suppress. Thus, in the balance, Touraine appears here what he emphatically is not—the alter-ego of Bell—the apologist of technocratic domination. Here Aronowitz sacrifices an invaluable ally in his attempt to surpass orthodox Marxism.

The maintenance of a Marxist framework is most explicit toward the end of *False Promises*. Here the reader is presented with an updated but nevertheless familiar formula for modern capitalism: that of *collective capital* facing *collective labor*. It is clearly Aronowitz's contention that late capitalist society has simplified the class antagonism at long last in the form of a confrontation between these two forces, with revolutionary implications: "But in my opinion, the objective possibility for the emergence of a new revolutionary subject is in the process of formation. This subject would not be the old working class... Nor would it be the controversial new force of technical and scientific workers whose absolute numbers have begun to approach the size of the skilled and semiskilled working force... The new revolutionary subject is simply this generation of collective labor that is emerging as the direct antagonist of the collective capitalist" (pp. 398-399).

Aronowitz, however, makes no attempt to develop the categories of collective capital and collective labor on a logical or conceptual basis by relating them to the original categorical framework from which they derive and which they presuppose (the theory of value and the wage labor-capital relation). Forgetting that they are logical categories, he presents them as sociological and historical—i.e., as if they are actually existing or emerging social classes. One wonders what distinguishes this position from that of Engels (in *Anti-Dühring*), Kautsky (in *The Class Struggle*), or the theorists of state monopoly capital in East Germany, the Soviet Union, and the French Communist party, all of whom identify about 99% of the population as the proletariat and the other 1% as monopoly capitalists. It is precisely this orthodox Marxist posture that prevents Aronowitz from grasping the theoretical import of the changes he has noticed in late capitalism. The implications of the changed relation between civil society and the state, and the new division of labor, for a fundamentally *socio-economic concept of class* are simply ignored, due to the collapse by Aronowitz of the logical and historical levels of analysis. But it is precisely this change that renders the class theory problematic for modern society. Surely the 'class compromise' instituted by the collaboration of the unions with management and the state, and the state's substantive intervention in the economy prevent the constitution of a proletariat as a radical socio-economic class facing capital. Structural changes in a system require at least a re-thinking of the dynamic possibilities of that system.

The new role of the state in the economy, education, and culture can be seen as a 'repoliticization' of civil society 'from above' that alters both the structural make up and restraints of the system, and the potentials for *class* constitution. While not directly confronting the problem of the adequacy of the Marxian class theory for liberal capitalism, thinkers as diverse as Alain Touraine, Jürgen Habermas and

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Claude Lefort have attempted to show its impossibility for late capitalism. (Lefort goes furthest in rejecting the class theory even for liberal capitalism.) To be sure, the work of these thinkers on criticism of Marx and analyses of late capitalism is at present quite tentative and schematic. I refer to them and to certain of their theses, however, for heuristic reasons—since all have freed themselves from dogmatically assuming the theory of the proletariat, their studies of contemporary capitalism point to areas of research and dynamic possibilities that a less self-critical Marxist would miss.

Touraine argues that the intervention of the state in the accumulation process results in the removal of power relations from the level of the industrial firm to that of the state interacting with corporate institutions. Modern capitalism is 'post-industrial' because power relations are no longer located on the level of the industrial firm operating in an economy closed to substantive state intervention. The politicization of the economy, along with the changed structure of labor (rationalization inside the firm), alters both the location and nature of the protagonists engaged in the social struggle for control over society. It becomes transferred to the state itself, as well as to new areas vital to the reproduction of modern capitalism—the educational institutions and the sphere of consumption.[25]

Habermas formulates this new relation between the state and the economy somewhat differently, but his analysis does not conflict with that of Touraine.[26] Since the state partially replaces the faulty market mechanism in steering the economy (in the monopolistic and public sectors), it becomes subject to conflicting demands by capital, labor, and the rest of the population for successful performance in the impartial satisfaction of everyone's needs. But, insofar as investment decisions are still made by private corporations, the state's planning serves not to solve, but to transpose the crisis tendencies of the capitalist economy into the political sphere of administrative planning. Purely economic crises that would simultaneously threaten social integration, characteristic of liberal capitalism, become less likely since the market no longer steers the economy exclusively nor functions as a major form of social integration. Moreover, through its intervention, the state both repoliticizes and neutralizes the traditional class struggle of the economic sphere between proletarians and capitalists. The quasi-political wage structure established through negotiation between oligopolistic corporations, unions, and the state constitutes a 'class compromise' between key sections of the working class and capitalism. The privileged sector of unionized labor receives a 'political price' for its labor in return for acceptance of the institutionalization of their struggles. The class conflict is kept latent in decisive areas. The former *political* anonymization of class domination is replaced by *social* anonymization. This is so because dysfunctional effects of the system are now disproportionately spread over the population as a whole—consumers, public transportation users, students, in addition to the non-unionized now all suffer from the cycle of inflation and unemployment and unsatisfied needs that stem from state interventionism and the class compromise.

But, in addition to the new economic role of the state and its diffusion of the proletariat-capitalist antagonism, the state's intervention into cultural aspects of everyday life increases the need for legitimation, and alters the kinds of groups that emerge in struggle. For, aspects of everyday life lose their nature-like quality when the

25. Cf. Alain Touraine, *Post Industrial Society* (New York, 1971).
26. Cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus, op.cit.*

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state attempts to openly regulate them. The thematization of problems leads to the awareness that things could be otherwise and mobilizes diverse social groups into positions of challenge, struggling for the right to participate in the determination of their everyday lives. Moreover, the problems that state intervention create for legitimation cannot be reduced to a logic of steering mechanisms (the economy or the state as planner) but rather have to do with the creation of meaningful norms and motives that integrate the individual into the system. While I cannot go into Habermas' analysis of the decline of traditional ideological supports for the system (and the motivational deficit that is tied to this), it is important simply to state that the insistence on a logic of the development of norms, ideologies, and motivations that is different from the logic of rationalized planning, allows Habermas to point to possible emergence of groups struggling over 'radical needs' in various spheres of society, over non-economic specific issues. However, his analysis is on a level of abstraction that does not permit him to identify the strata in question. What it does imply is the impossibility of locating a *single* revolutionary subject in any sphere of society, be it the economy, the family, or the university.[27]

Touraine is less hesitant to identify the new protagonists in social conflict. As direct labor becomes supplemented increasingly with scientific and technical labor (mental labor), the groups most closely bound to the innovative objectives of society (and thus in a position of potential power) become youth, students, and consumers—youth and students due to internal changes in the structure of labor, consumers due to the increased importance of the home market for the realization of capitalist profit in light of high productivity. Touraine argues that the university moves to the center of the struggle as an institution vitally important to the reproduction of modern society because it is there that the future 'mental' workers are trained. And, the dynamics of the university, of educational processes, are different from those of the labor process. The struggle takes the form of a challenge of the right of the technocracy to organize institutions without the free participation of those affected by them. This leads Touraine to conclude that opposed to the technocrats in control of the state, the economy, and other major institutions, a multitude of struggles and groups will emerge in various spheres of modern life—the university, the home, and so on, that cannot be comprehended in class terms or in terms of the primacy of the proletariat. Thus, for Touraine as well as for Habermas, the structures of modern capitalist society are quite new, open up a multitude of dynamic potentialities, and must be analyzed on their own ground. Both have learned from the experience of the New Left and attempted to comprehend the structures of late capitalism that were the basis for its emergence. The difference between their approach and that of Aronowitz, who also takes cognizance of the 1960s, is that they do not cling to a class analysis that blinds them to actual forces in motion or drives them to subsume them under the concept of the proletariat.

Aronowitz, to be sure, notices changes in the structure of labor, resulting in new strata of workers and increased heterogeneity of kinds of labor, but his collapse of the

27. While the level of abstraction of this book does not allow for a discussion of actual strata that may carry radical needs, or that are parts of a dominant 'political' class, the logic of the work is certainly not closed to such a discussion. In fact, Lefort's thesis on bureaucracy fits in quite well with Habermas' analysis of the state in late capitalism, as does Touraine's discussion of students and consumers. It is to Habermas' merit that he does not hastily try to locate radical groups, but at this preliminary stage of analysis rather prefers to point to important areas of research to be done.

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logical and historical levels of analysis brings him to insist on an essential homogenization of the working class (and of the capitalist class) in order to corroborate his polarization thesis. He points, for example, to the new 'professional servant strata,' high officials in political and economic institutions who constitute the subordinate but crucial link in planning and binding politics and economics. This group consists of top-level managers representing corporate interests on the national level, and middle-range managers representing the corporation at the state and local level. But again, function is identified with status, and these managers are seen as adjuncts of the capitalist class because they serve to perpetuate the system and conform to corporate needs. They are thus part of collective capital. Unfortunately, this overzealous identification of all those in power under the rubric of 'collective capital' misses the extremely important distinctions between capitalists, technocrats, and bureaucrats, and the possible contradictions between them.

Claude Lefort attempts to analyze the interrelation between capitalism and bureaucracy in light of the changed relation between the state and civil society and the conflicting tendencies of the capitalist and bureaucratic strata.[28] But instead of presenting state capitalist planning as a *fait accompli* (as Aronowitz does), he argues that while bureaucratic planning and control of all society through the state apparatus is true of the Soviet Union, it is only a desideratum of bureaucrats in late capitalist societies. State planning would go against the interests of the large capitalists whose existence is predicated on the independent decision-making that private property confers on owners. While corporate capital requires state assistance, it is opposed to state take-over. For Habermas, state capitalism cannot be fully realized because of the conflicting planning imperatives implied in many capitals, not to speak of the fact that with political intervention in the economy, conflicting demands by the underlying population are also triggered. Lefort, however, attempts a sociological analysis of the different strata interested in planning, showing that the tendencies of the bureaucratic strata to total control by the state run counter to those of capitalists. However, on the empirical level, Lefort shows that no smooth transition to bureaucratic state planning could occur in the west, where the bureaucracy does not exist as a class, but is fragmented in the various institutions of the state and civil society and, more significant, relies precisely on capitalism for whatever privileged position it already has. Thus, the top strata of late capitalist society consist of capitalists, bureaucrats (competing with each other and with capital), and technical experts with one foot in the managerial, hierarchical positions, and another in the division of labor as technically determined.[29] A unity of class and of interest cannot be assumed between them beyond limited strategic concerns. Moreover, the dynamics and conflicts between them are sure to be overlooked with a 'collective capital' thesis that imputes the logic of capital to the state and to those in charge of it! Thus, although schematic and incomplete, the work of Habermas, Lefort, and Touraine does

28. Cf. Claude Lefort, "What Is Bureaucracy?" in *Telos* 22 (Winter 1974-75), pp. 31-65.

29. Lefort distinguishes between bureaucrats and technicians by arguing that bureaucracy is not a category of the division of labor, but rather a political stratum that emerges within the various spheres of society—in the firm as well as in the state. Technicians, on the other hand, can, like bureaucrats, have a hierarchical position and a degree of power over their underlinges, but also have one leg in the (technical) division of labor and owe their status in part to their technical qualifications.

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point to important new directions for research.

Alongside of this 'professional servant strata' Aronowitz discusses the new correlates of the category of wage labor—the 'white collar proletarians.' This group consists of workers in the 'non-productive' sector—sales, corporate administration, government employees (clerks, salespeople, specialized technicians). But the concern with this 'new middle class' is to show that it isn't one at all, but rather is an extension of the proletariat. Aronowitz accordingly takes issue with C.W. Mills' term 'white collar,' accusing him of having uncritically adopted this categorization of the labor force from the United States department of labor.[30] The perniciousness of Mills' so-called ideological insistence on the homogeneity and community of interests of those working in the non-goods producing tasks lie (for Aronowitz) in its misguided acceptance of the notion, carefully promulgated by capital, that managers and employees have more in common than employees and proletarians. Rather than accusing Aronowitz of deliberately misreading Mills in order to set up a straw man, I shall attribute this gross misrepresentation to the perils of the Evelyn Woods' speed-reading method. Any careful reader of Mills' *White Collar* would recognize that it contains precisely a critique of those categorizations and distinctions that Aronowitz assumes Mills adopts. As even he must admit, it was Mills who pointed to the proletarianization of the 'new middle class' in terms of their alienation, impotence and boredom. Moreover, it was Mills who argued for the increasing structural similarity of white collar and blue collar work, from a double perspective. On the one hand, proletarian labor has changed from heavy work with one's hands, to work on machines. On the other, middle class work has lost its prior independence, and has become internally hierarchical, bureaucratized, and mechanized. In short, Mills pointed to the tendency for blue and whilte collar work to approach each other—all work on machines is bureaucratized hierarchies. In addition, Mills goes to great pains to distinguish between the interests of the managers (whom he too considers representatives of capital) and low echelon white collar workers who are proletarianized. Thus, Aronowitz's argument for the similarity of the structure of labor of the two strata is anticipated by Mills by over twenty years![31]

Nevertheless, there are differences between Aronowitz and Mills even though *White Collar* is Mills' most 'Marxist' book. For Aronowitz's covert use of Marxism assumes that this structural similarity begets a sociological identity such that white and blue collar workers are equally proletarians. Thus, unlike Mills, he relegates the problem of status to that of mere ideology. While he is forced to admit that white collar workers distinguish themselves from proletarians (and vice versa) and do not consider themselves workers but employees, Aronowitz dismisses these distinction as ephemeral with no basis in 'class structure.' Mills was not so hasty. To be sure, in terms of 'mode of appropriation,' Marx's criterion for class, the 'new middle classes' are closer to the industrial proletariat than the old self-employed middle classes. But this could be interpreted to show either that the old criterion for class specificity needs to be supplemented, or that class analysis in the Marxian sense must be replaced by a new form of stratification analysis that reveals domination of the economy and political analysis of the state. For, even if one could consistently argue that today the category of wage labor has been extended historically to comprehend all laborers (with the

30. F.P., p. 291.
31. Cf. C.W. Mills, *White Collar* (New York, 1951), passim.

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decline of the peasantry and the old middle classes), one would have to admit that empirically this category now has to comprehend a vast heterogeneity of socio-economic strata whose status, type of work, and self-identity differ radically. Moreover, one would have to then analyze the *hierarchical* differences between these strata and account for power differentials. Although Mills pointed out the shaky foundations of white collar status compared to those of the old middle class, he did not deny their existence. While the independence of the old middle class disappears, identification with the corporation and hierarchical differences purportedly based on technical skill become the new basis for status differences. In fact, one could argue that the notion that all workers are part of a single class simply because their structural position conforms to the category of wage labor is even more ideological a claim since it is not even grounded in appearances but rather in some sort of dogmatic essentialism.

But it is not only the lower strata of the white collar workers who are 'proletarianized' according to *False Promises*. Drawing from André Gorz's *Strategy for Labor*, Aronowitz points to the scientists, engineers, and technicians in modern industry as the 'new front-line production workers' who move to the center of the production process as manual labor is replaced in importance by knowledge. Unlike Gorz, however, the concern with this strata is not to distinguish it from the old working class regarding new needs and possibilities, nor to distinguish between the social-hierarchical division of labor imposed for the purposes of domination and the technically necessary divisions.[32] (This, of course, is a queston that could only be answered through an empirical investigation of every industry.) In fact, Aronowitz seems to argue that the division of labor today is mostly socially determined and that the superior positions of technical workers is based on considerations of power rather than imperatives of machine production.[33] Aronowitz's concern is rather to argue for the proletarian character of this stratum and its structural and essential identity to other working class individuals. The technician also performs alienating labor and is virtually powerless. But here, too, the problem is that the technician has the ideological illusion of power due to his superior position in the hierarchy and therefore does not recognize his working class status.

Thus Aronowitz's analysis of the structure of labor in late capitalism recognizes the emergence of new strata of workers but rejects their 'apparent' heterogeneity on the basis of a mythological class unity that either *is* true objectively (in essence) but is not yet recognized subjectively, or must come into being through self-formative activity of the class in the future. While I sympathize wholeheartedly with the impulse to argue against the bleak and ideological images of mass society put forth by authors such as Bell and Lipset, I am afraid that Aronowitz throws out the baby with the bathwater (p. 326).

It is, of course, absurd to maintain (with Bell and Lipset) that with the 'class compromise' of corporate capitalism the working classes have achieved full citizenship and have no need to contest a system that delivers the goods. The implications of the term 'mass society' are also to be rejected, for rather than resulting in a homogeneous massification of subordinate strata, late capitalism has increased the heterogeneity of

32. Cf. André Gorz, *Strategy for Labor, op.cit.*, and A. Gorz, "Technical Intelligence and the Capitalist Division of Labor," *Telos* 12 (1972).

33. F.P., pp. 151-156.

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the class structure and the hierarchical relations therein. But in his utter contempt for 'bourgeois sociology' (often deserved), Aronowitz misses some valid (albeit ideologically couched) insights and ends up with a similar picture of modern society (although he evaluates it different). The basic insight that is ignored is the increased stratification of the working element of modern society and the difficulties this poses for Marxian theory. This does not of course mean that the proletariat is now fat and content, or that there is no need for revolution. But neither does it call for an essentialistic analysis identifying all these strata, despite their different power positions in the hierarchy and despite their varying self-identities, as proletarians. Rather, it should point a critical thinker both to reevaluate the original class theory of Marx and to look for new radical possibilities in other sphres of society in addition to the economy, in light of the changes both in the structure of labor and the relation between state and civil society.

*False Promises*, however, insists in principle on the proletariat. In addition to the supposed *structural* homogeneity of all who labor (besides managers), the erosion of the old ethnic divisions is pointed to as the basis for an argument of *cultural* homogeneity of the working class (pp. 401-402). All are now subjected to the same processses of socialization and manipulation through the institutions of mass culture. Moreover, due to increased productivity and industry's need for educated workers, the adult worker has more free time and the working class youth experience a protraction of childhood which becomes the basis, in Aronowitz's opinion, for a radical rejection of the work ethic of capitalism. Aronowitz develops a theory of *play* as the experiential ground for emancipatory impulses in the new working class. The theory of play is to replace what he calls the biologistic instinct theory of Marcuse and challenge the one-sided view of socialization attained through exclusive focus on those institutions integrating the child's personality structure into the framework of capitalism (family, school, etc.). Play is presented as the childhood experience of non-hierarchical, non-instrumental activity for its own sake involving interaction between equals. It is on this fundamental experience (along with love and creative work) that the subjective possibility for the liberatory impulses of the working class is based (p. 58). Again, the argument is too quick. While it is to Aronowitz's credit to have countered the 'oversocialization' thesis that stresses integrative aspects of childhood experience, he in no way demonstrates that, as a past remembrance, play is an adequate ground for liberatory impulses of the proletariat. Without pointing to radical needs that emerge in the course of adult life, it is impossible to seriously argue that the nostalgia for ply and youth, by workers, could lead to anything more than just that—nostalgia.

But the disappearance of old working class ethnic cultures, the increase of free time, education and childhood, the absence of a 'scarcity consciousness' on the part of comparatively well-off youth workers, are the basis on which Aronowitz argues for the possible emergence of a new, autonomous working class culture to challenge capitalist social relations. The workers themselves are to develop a conscious opposition culture—a popular culture that counters the effects of mass culture and points to a radically different culture. The programmatic character of this notion of popular culture is obvious in *False Promises.*[34] Aronowitz himself is forced to admit that the

34. Subsequent to the publication of *False Promises,* Aronowitz seems to have altered his position. At a conference on mass culture at the Institute for Policy Studies, he renounced the program of a popular working class culture as not feasible. However, as *False Promises* is only two

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workers have not liberated themselves from the authoritarian institutions or from ideologies of racism, sexism, and status. Nor have they overcome divisions, both horizontal and hierarchical, in the structure of labor: "...There is no articulate force within the working class that possesses an understanding of the fundamental contradiction between the industrial structure and its containment of the liberatory possibilities it has generated" (p. 440). In fact, the only actual struggles that he locates as expressive of this new radical popular culture of the working class are precisely *non-working class-specific*—i.e., the youth rebellion of the 1960s, the black revolt, and the women's movement. Although many of the youthful, black, or women rebels might also have been workers, their struggles were over their position as powerless students, members of a race that is discriminated against, and members of an oppressed sex. Instead of trying to comprehend the genesis and import of these struggles in terms of the structures of modern capitalism and as forms of challenge implying new radical possibilities. Aronowitz both claims these breakthroughs as feats of the working class, and denigrates them for not having transcended their particularism! In short, these groups made the fatal error of ignoring their common working class status. When issues of feminism, nationalism, and racism are fought for independently of a unified class identity, they become, in Aronowitz's judgment, demands of oppressed groups to be exploited *on an equal basis* (pp. 413-414).

One cannot fail to recognize here a new version of the old communist dogmas that subordinate particular struggles to so-called universalistic interests of the working class. In fact, leftists are indicted in *False Promises* for having failed to find a strategy to unify these sectoral struggles. But isn't the irrelevance of the socialist and communist parties rather to be located in their attempts to persuade people to sacrifice their immediate needs to some mythic general interset of the class, and their denigration of the struggles of other groups? Surely May '68 in France demonstrates this. It is not that the politics of the various groups of the 1960s was unproblematic. The separatist politics of blacks and women, for example, certainly did result in particularistic, narrow-minded and illusory groups and visions. But neither the attempt to continuously relocate universality in any one of these groups à la Marcuse (women are the new radical subject, or blacks, or students), nor the attitude of *False Promises* that reduces all to their commonality of being wage laborers, calling for a new working class politics, is an adequate way of dealing with the problem. Both alternatives are, oddly enough, still too faithful to the Marxist class theory despite their abandonment of the industrial proeltariat as the exclusive revolutionary class. Their faithfulness lies in the clinging to the notion that there will be *a* group (either a conglomerate of individuals or of several groups) that will have universalistic needs due to its exploitation, alienation or what have you, and that this group will be *the* revolutionary subject. This position by force compels one to see all the struggles over immediate needs of other groups and individuals as particularistic. But there is another way of looking at the matter. If one is able to see that the different spheres of society have different structures and dynamics (the family and the state are organized differently than the economy despite formal similarities) one could then begin to consider the needs and struggles of the various spheres in a new light. There would no longer be the necessity to insist on a single universal subject, nor to identify it as the proletariat. The

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years old, it is not unreasonable to criticize Aronowitz for the positions in the book, especially since they are so common among the left.

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problem of universal-particular, immediate-general interests, could be reformulated such that they refer not to specific groups who are asked to forego their partial needs in the name of a more general interest, but rather to individuals who have both partial and universalizable needs. Instead of automatically identifying the needs of particular groups as *particularistic*, a new form of organization that operates in the manner of a public could, through free discussion, begin to discover which of these needs are in fact universalizable (if reformulated) and open to consensus, and which are not. Those which are not would require compromise. This form of organization, which would not in any traditional sense of the word be called a party, would attempt not to repress or call for the sacrifice of particular needs, but rather would be a space where whatever generalizability exists could be rediscovered.[35] Again, these ideas are tentative, but point to a rethinking of traditional forms of struggle and politics.

It is ironic that in the same breath that Aronowitz inveighs against a party, he argues that the task of the left is to re-educate the workers to combat the influence of the school, the family, and the workplace. "The central task of a New Left among the working class is to create the conditions for the separation of popular culture from mass culture" (p. 437). But who educates the educators? Unfortunately, Aronowitz does not see that despite his principled insistence on the self-constitution of the working class, the logic of his analysis points to a party. So long as one retains the notion of the proletariat as *the* revolutionary subject, one cannot avoid the necessity of a party to represent the universalistic interests of the class as a whole over and against the particular felt needs of various sections. An immanent critique of Marx's class analysis would have revealed this problematic to Aronowitz, for it was just as impossible then as now to present the proletariat (however it is defined) as capable of synthesizing not only itself, but struggles of other groups in other spheres of society without the aid of a party. Marx, to be sure, believed in the possible self-constitution of the prolatariat as a radical class, as is evident from the theses on Feuerbach. But he was unable to demonstrate this belief. Both Lenin and Lukács recognized the impossibility of such a task and quite consistently, given their dogmatic assumptions about the working class, argued for the necessity of a party (albeit with different conceptions). Aronowitz's uncritical acceptance of the basics of the class theory in the context of the theory of reification, logically must lead to the same conclusion. But if one rejects the Lukácsian-Leninist solution as he does, one must also begin to question the way in which they posed the problem. Instead of asking why the working class has not become class conscious, and posing for it the task of self-constitution as universal class, one might ask this question: why does one assume that the revolution will be made by a group that is a) *a class*, and b) *universal*? The problem is not one of class consciousness but of the class concept. The notion of a universal class, whether the bureaucracy, the proletariat, or what have you, is itself problematic and needs to be criticized. Marx's presuppositions must, in short, be reexamined. For it is not simply the structural changes in late capitalism that render the class theory inadequate, or outdated today as Habermas and Touraine have it. Rather, it is the theory itself that is problematic, for Marx never succeed in overcoming its internal inconsistencies. Only an immanent critique of the original theory combined with new attempts at theoretically comprehending modern capitalism would allow leftists to really

35. For an excellent discussion of the new relation between theory and praxis that such an alternative would institute, cf. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Praxis, op.cit.*, pp. 1-41.

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overcome the dogmas and logic of orthodox Marxism. Most important, neither the critique of political economy, nor the class theory can be taken for granted but their very presuppositions must be reexamined. *False Promises* fails to overcome the past (as have so many other Marxists) because Aronowitz does not even understand the premises of the theory that he rejects and, paradoxically, in the absence of anything better, is forced to resuscitate.

## *Promises, Premises and Problems: Reply to Cohen*

### by Mary Ellen Batiuk, Patricia Fleming, and Patrick Murray

Jean Cohen has provided a curious critique of Stanley Aronowitz's *False Promises*. Accusing Aronowitz of falling into any number of well-worn Marxist-theoretical booby-traps (harboring covert presuppositions, merely reformulating old categories to fit new empirical changes, reintroducing dogmas, failing to overcome the past, etc.), Cohen moves to set Aronowitz right by providing her own immanent critique of Marx and constructing an alternative to the Marxist-Lukácsian-Leninist (and Aronowitzist?) proletarian dilemma. But following Cohen's "moves" is like running to keep up with Alice's Red Queen—only instead of standing still, we find ourselves losing ground. In failing to come to terms with *False Promises* or Aronowitz or the premises of her own rehashed version of Habermas, Cohen's criticisms and the alternative model she presents create more problems than they solve.

To begin with, by placing *False Promises* within such an abstract discussion, Cohen not only ignores the guts of the book, but seriously misrepresents much of its intent and many of its conclusions. In *False Promises*, Aronowitz simply does not develop a full-blown theory of the revolutionary proletariat. Thus, to claim, as Cohen does, that she has unearthed the *one theory* (Lukács' theory of reification) that "provides the basic philosophical orientation" for *False Promises* and informs Aronowitz's own understanding of the development of the American working class from the post-Civil War period onward is unwarranted. If anything, Aronowitz, like the German New Left, has been politically influenced much more by Korsch and the Council Communists than by Lukács.[1] Ironically though, what is at stake here is Cohen's inability to recognize the one Lukácsian category that seems to have influenced Aronowitz more than any other—the category of the totality. Aronowitz claims that "It has been an unfortunate tendency among those who have tried to understand the American working class, its history, institutions and political consciousness to treat each of these separately. It is as if a whole person were being cut up into different discrete sections instead of being comprehended as a totality," and that his project is "an attempt to present that totality."[2] Thus, while Aronowitz undertakes a concrete analysis of the totality (as history, objective events and institutional conflict, as well as the structures of everyday life), Cohen is off spinning webs of abstract categories. This

1. Cf. Stanley Aronowitz, "Left-Wing Communism: The Reply to Lenin," in Howard and Klare, eds., *The Unknown Dimension: European Marxism Since Lenin* (New York, 1972), pp. 169-194.

2. Stanley Aronowitz, *False Promises* (New York, 1973), pp. xi.

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is never more clear than when in response to her own version of Aronowitz's question, "What are the forces at work which prevent the emergence of revolutionary class consciousness?" Cohen can see only "a questionable version of Lukács' reification theory" ignoring completely Aronowitz's own thesis concerning the divisive effects of a culturally fragmented immigrant working population, further fragmented within the social division of labor. This separation of social theory and social history is symptomatic of the kind of bifurcated reasoning that Cohen carries on throughout her critique.

Aronowitz's debt to Lukács, however, obviously extends beyond his use of the category of the "totality" and into the theory of reification. But here again, it seems to be Cohen's dehistoricized version of Lukács, as well as her reduction of all Hegelian-Marxism to Lukács, that must seriously be questioned. According to Cohen, Aronowitz missed Lukács' point (and exactly where Lukács makes this point we have no indication) in arguing that "even works of art and science become commodities for sale and thus all of society takes on the aspect of one big market." Apparently, she has forgotten Lukács' own remarkably similar statement in the 1920 essay "The Old Culture and the New Culture" when he notes: "The most decisive feature of capitalist society, then, is that economic life ceased to be a means to social life; it placed itself at the center, became an end in itself, the goal of all social activity. The first and most important result was that the life of society was transformed into a grand exchange relationship; society itself became a huge market... a thing has value only as a ware bought and sold on the market."[3] Similarly, the problems generated in this kind of monolithic approach to Lukács reappear in Cohen's presentation of the relationships between dogmatism, logic and history with regard to the unfolding of the reification thesis. What Cohen fails to see here is that the "logic" that she finds at work in the movement from Lukács' dogmatic insistence on the notion of an industrial proletariat to his acceptance of Leninism cannot be superimposed *in toto* on Aronowitz fifty years later, while again failing to come to terms with what Aronowitz does say on the topic.

In mentioning Lukács, Aronowitz indicates his broader affiliations to an Hegelian-Marxist tradition which *does not necessarily reduce to* the Lukácsian problematic but also includes Korsch, Gramsci and others whose politics have been radically different. In Gramsci, for example, the totalization of the social negativity generated by capitalism is not carried out *from above* as in Lukács but through *education* understood as a process of self-constitution aiming at the creation of social individuality. Similarly, Korsch, in rejecting as ideology all theory that is not directly articulated as *objective mediation* by the revolutionary subject, prevents the precipitation of the Hegelian-Marxist problematic into the Lukácsian-Stalinist outcome. If anything, Aronowitz is much closer to Gramsci and Korsch than to Lukács in terms of political orientation, and Cohen, in claiming that his views reduce to Stalinism is offering not a critique but an unwarranted reduction of her own.

All of this notwithstanding, a far more basic source of Cohen's discomfort with *False Promises* is Aronowitz's failure to provide an immanent critique of original categories as they occur in Marx. In at least two places she hints at what such a critique should be like. In each case, problems abound.

For Cohen, Habermas' reintroduction of the distinction between *labor* and

3. Georg Lukács, "The Old Culture and the New Culture," *Telos* 5 (Spring, 1970), p. 22.

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*interaction* (which is carried throughout his work under various themes—most notably as instrumental action and communicative action) is a decisive critique of Marx's concept of labor. In fact, the distinction provides Cohen the theoretical tools with which to bring to light Aronowitz's "productivist bias" and to support her claim that a monological approach to a theory of the proletariat is completely wrongheaded. Just as communication is structurally different from production, and to subsume the former under the latter ignores the dimension of human interaction as a key role in revolutionary praxis, so also, for Cohen, the theory of the proletariat advanced in *False Promises* ignores the multi-dimensional character and particular needs of sectors of present-day society.

But Cohen does not take seriously her own maxim of returning to a critique of Marx's original categories and instead adopts Habermas wholeheartedly. Had she returned to the *Grundrisse*, at the very least, she would have found that, for Marx, labor and interaction are always dialectically related: "Certainly, labor obtains its measure from the outside, through the aim to be obtained and the obstacles to be overcome in attaining it. But Smith has no inkling whatever that this overcoming of obstacles is in itself a liberating activity—and that, further, the external aims become stripped of the semblance of merely external natural urgencies and become posited as aims which the individual himself posits—hence, as self-realization, objectification of the subject, hence real freedom whose action is, precisely, labor."[4] In fact, it is not clear why Cohen turns to Habermas at all. It is, perhaps, Habermas' *historical* claim that *"liberation from hunger and misery* does not necessarily converge with *liberation from servitude and degradation"*[5] which attracts her. But given her previous statement that historical evidence cannot refute Marxism while attempts to rework the original categories in light of such evidence cannot vindicate it, how seriously are we to consider her appeal to historical evidence as justification for a move toward Habermas, but not back to Marx? In the same breath, Cohen appeals to and denies the role of historical evidence. She has consequently remained uncritical of Habermas' return to the early Hegel. As Winfield has pointed out in his treatment of the false notions of labor that dominate Marxist discussions, "Habermas is unable to conceive any immanent relation between the dialectic of Representation and labor and that of Reciprocal Recognition," and, "when Habermas does come to formulate the mediating unity of *labor* and *interaction*, he is unable to determine it without identifying it with interaction itself."[6]

This uncritical attitude continues to be evident in her own immanent critique of class theory. Once again her motivation here is very similar to Habermas' critique of Marx's concept of labor, *i.e.*, that not developing the proper distinctions has led to a problematic determinism or linearity. "...Marx's brilliant insight into the dialectical relationship between the forces of production and the relations of production could very quickly be misinterpreted in a mechanistic manner"[7] or, as Cohen put it, "The tendency to determinism that Habermas identifies through a meta-theoretical critique, I see rooted in the Marxian notion and theory of class as well." But these distinctions yield more problems than solutions.

4. Karl Marx, *Grundrisse,* trans. Martin J. Nicolaus (London, 1973), p. 611.
5. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Praxis*, trans. John Viertel (Boston, 1973), p. 169.
6. Richard Winfield, "The Dilemma of Labor in Marxist Discussion," in this issue of *Telos.*
7. Habermas, *op.cit.*

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Cohen claims that Marx's theory of the proletariat is hardly descriptive (as Aronowitz would seem to hold) but rather functions on several levels of analysis—philosophical, structural, sociological and cultural. She claims that Marx first arrives at the proletariat through a philosophical critique of Hegel. But from the discussion it is not clear why she characterizes this level as philosophical, for Marx reconstitutes the *concept* of the universal class while challenging Hegel on the identification of which section of the populace represents it. According to Cohen, Marx does not reject Hegel's notion of the *universal class*, but rejects the bureaucracy as a *false universal* and replaces it with the proletariat. But more importantly in separating this level of analysis, Cohen completely misunderstands the Marxian dialectic of *determinate abstraction*, for none of Marx's categories were ever purely philosophical but rather dialectically reflect the totality of which they are a part.

Cohen insists on drawing a distinction between the *logical* and the *sociological* level of analysis—a distinction she believes Marx himself had a tendency to collapse. She claims that once the proletariat was sociologically located, Marx *imposed* logical categories upon it to provide the concrete laws of motion indicating the path required for the overthrow of its oppression and the establishment of a positive alternative. "Moreover, he (Marx) assumed that the logic of the category of wage labor sets out the essence of the logic of contradiction and protest to be developed by the proletariat as the category of 'class interest' demonstrates." Marx's analysis here, for Cohen, is neither science in the way she regards Smith and Ricardo's political economy, nor philosophy, but has the status of *critique*. In fact, this level of analysis moves to the center of Marx's work (especially in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*) since certain notions do become refined as one reads Marx chronologically. But it is precisely this bifurcation of the "logical" and the "sociological" in Cohen that leads her to distort the significance of the "logical level" by failing to see that the logical presentation articulates the essential structure of empirical appearances. Hence, she ends up with an outrageous caricature of class conflict as based on the developmental logic of categories as if these categories themselves did not draw their content from the living context of class conflict. These distinctions lead her to claim that the "wage-labor/capital relation (categories of the value theory) moves to the center of Marx's theory: its developmental logic being identical with the logic of expanded reproduction (accumulation) as well as, the basis on which the oppositional character of the sociological correlates of these categories (proletariat and capitalist classes) is to be grounded."

Nowhere does Cohen *justify* her own critical separation of the logical and sociological levels, although imbedded in her argumentation is a considerable aversion to the philosophical model of the subject-object dialectic. For this reason it is worthwhile to consider what Cohen attributes to this dialectical viewpoint; indeed, it proves remarkable. According to Cohen, despite everything Aronowitz explicitly says on the matter, allegedly, the logic of his (Lukácsian) position leads necessarily to the need for a party. Why is this so? Apparently it is because Lukács employed a subject-object dialectic in his theory of reification which necessitates achieving a single revolutionary subject able to totalize all the various struggles in society. Had Cohen read other Hegelian-Marxist texts in addition to Lukács' *History and Class Consciousness*, however, she might have realized that the Stalinist outcome in Lukács is not the result of the subject-object dialectic, but of his posing of the question in

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Weberian terms of "objective truth"[8] and answering it abstractly through a forced part-whole reconciliation not necessarily in the Hegelian-Marxist tradition and not to be found in either Korsch or Gramsci. But, according to Cohen, to accept any pervasive dialectical characterization of oppression in society, *i.e.*, to employ the category of totality, implies the need for a party: "an agent of unification able to totalize the struggles of the different spheres would be required."

"Required" by whom and for what? The only necessity that can be seen here is that of technical efficiency. The "logic" of Cohen's claim here is as abstract as the Lukácsian deduction of the Leninist party, for what is the point of relating the various struggles to the capitalist mode of production and reproduction of everyday life if not to end the patterns of domination? Then what would ever "require" us to reintroduce patterns of domination in the new form of a party? The fact that Cohen writes off Aronowitz's objections to a party as solely moral only serves to implicate rather than free her from the Leninist "logic" of efficiency. Even more to the point, this false separation of the moral sphere indicates once again Cohen's neopositivism. In Hegelian-Marxism there is no separate moral dimension contraposed to the allegedly "empirical." Morality is itself an historical force when it concretely mediates political practice as it obviously does with Aronowitz.

Nevertheless, for Cohen, to employ a subject-object dialectic in the study of society and in particular revolution, results in the demand for the totalization of a subject where "totalize" means "totalitarianization." What pops up here is the old hack that the dialectics of subject-object are inherently totalitarian. This equation was not at all obvious to Marx who spent his life trying to "totalize" the struggle against capitalist society. But Cohen assures us that this was just another one of his mistakes: "Marx, to be sure, believed in the self constitution of the proletariat as a radical class, as is evident from the theses on Feuerbach. But he was unable to demonstrate this belief."[9]

Given this state of affairs, it is not surprising that she takes Aronowitz to task for charging the Left with the job of unifying *particular* struggles within society. Aronowitz's point makes good dialectical sense in addition to expressing one of the fundamental lessons of the New Left. But in Cohen's Popperian view of dialectical logic, to unify is necessarily to *subordinate* particular interests. Cohen's alternative politics recycles classical British political economy: "The problem of universal-particular immediate-general interests could be reformulated such that they refer not to specific groups who are asked to forego their partial needs in the name of a more general interest, but rather to individuals who have both partial and universalizable needs." The private individual here takes priority over the social individual and the central problematic of revolutionary praxis becomes, for Cohen as for Habermas, the development of a theory of undistorted communication. One is reminded here of the famous Fritz S. Perls poster "I do my thing and you do your thing. I am not in this world to live up to your expectations and you are not in this world to live up to mine. You are you and I am I, and if by chance we find each other, it's beautifull"

8. Cf. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Adventures of the Dialectic*, trans. Joseph Bien (Evanston, 1973).

9. Yet in Marx, as Cohen should know, the point is not to demonstrate beliefs at all, but rather to concretely realize them. It is not the point to contemplatively deduce a class, but to put forth a theoretical mediation able to facilitate the coming into being of a qualitatively different social structure.

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This stress on the individual may be a good antidote to the widespread totalitarianism in communist politics in the twentieth century, but need not and should not result in the distortion and occlusion of Hegel's and Marx's dialectical conception of *social individualism*. Clearly, to employ the dialectical model of subject and object need not imply totalitarian politics, whether of a party or of any other type. Nor should the rejection of totalitarian politics warrant a return to classical British political economy. Cohen would do well to rethink her position on several counts: substituting a broader conception of Hegelian Marxism for her reliance on Lukács, critically examining the implications of her Habermasian presuppositions and updating her political strategies.

## *From Liblice to Kafka*

### by Tom Morris

In his documentation of the circumstances surrounding the 1963 Liblice Conference on Franz Kafka (*Telos* 23), Antonin Liehm and others make the point that Kafka has been the victim of at least two kinds of ideological assault in Eastern Europe: either he is attacked openly as being decadent and pessimistic or obliterated without trial through censorship and silence. Liehm's account provides a record of a momentary break in that silence and also introduces several essential questions concerning Kafka's work. On one issue, however, it maintains the silence while on another it becomes entangled in the thinking of the situation from which it seeks a way out. There is no mention of the fact that one of the hidden sources of anxiety at the conference and among most critics everywhere is Kafka's interest in and relevance to the anarchist perspective. Frantisek Kautman re-assured the conference participants that " 'Kafka was not an active anarchist' like most left wing Czechs were at the time."[1] Thus the issue was repressed by unacknowledged consent. In itself, this would hardly be a significant omission from Liehm's record if it were not also apparent that the discussion of Kafka by Liehm, Karst, and Garaudy avoids entering into its own implicit conclusions, that is, into the realm of an anarchist-influenced analysis of both the conference and Kafka. I will return later to Kafka's interests and to some of the values of his fiction for an anarchist who seeks to understand him and the conference. The second issue is more complex and perhaps far more important.

The three critics would probably agree with Karst that the objective world in much of Kafka's fiction is portrayed "as a gigantic, monolithic, bureaucratic apparatus" within which a man can only "become a part of an anonymous mechanism and the victim of an inscrutable apparatus of power."[2] This is far more than many critics of Kafka's fiction would concede with their defensive preoccupation with reifying his fictional worlds into other-worldly spiritual kingdoms. Yet the conference served, to

1. E. Bahr, "Kafka and the Prague Spring," *Mosaic*, vol. 3, no. 4 (1970), p. 22.
2. Antonin J. Liehm, "Franz Kafka in Eastern Europe," *Telos*, no. 23 (1975), p. 70.

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some extent intentionally it seems, to drag Kafka into the double apparatus of state and ideology from which there can be no sane exit. Liehm and the others seem ambivalent about this process. Karst and Garaudy point out the disastrous consequences for literature when it is used as a political tool and yet they and Sartre and Liehm express enthusiasm over the possibilities of scoring points for "their" side through the *use* of Kafka and the conference. Liehm objects to Evgeni Evseiev's comment that: " 'Anti-socialist forces considered the Kafka discussions as an effective instrument which could legally transform itself unhindered into an attack against socialism in the realm of ideology and politics.' "[3] But Liehm has already announced enthusiastically early in the article that in Czechoslovakia "this conference and Franz Kafka's official rehabilitation meant a great deal more. It became one of the signals for far-reaching changes within the country's social, political and cultural structures which reached a climax during the first eight months of 1968."[4] Perhaps Evseiev's fears are over-stated in that the "progressives" at the conference were not intent on attacking socialism in general, even if a stand against authoritarian socialism implies a critical stand against every socialist state in existence today. What is surprising in Liehm's critical tone towards Evseiev is that he fails to acknowledge that Evseiev has fairly accurately described the intent, conscious and-or unconscious, of those behind the conference. Karst refers to Liblice as "a symbol of hope," not just a literary event but "also political."[5] Later he names the primary issue behind the conference: "The whole political problem was *Kafka's acceptance in the East.*"[6] Sartre also enters into the manifold contradictions implicit in any ideological warring with literature. On the one hand he says that: " 'In East and West alike, we are wronging Kafka by our partisan passions and nowhere do we have the benefit of his real universality,' "[7] but then he proceeds to ask a Soviet critic: " 'But why haven't you yourselves written a critical Marxist study on Kafka and gotten him on your side?' "[8]

The question can be put in this way: is there a significant difference between the abusive, false, and simple-minded attacks on Kafka turned out by state-sponsored critics in defense of their state's ideological demands *and* the forcing of Kafka and his work—or any writer and his work—into a context in which he clearly becomes a weapon for a counter, albeit "progressive," ideological and political movement? Even if one were to concede a difference, and I would not, what are the consequences for both literature and the character of critical debate once one enters into an exchange in which ideology is at issue and one part has a total investment not in insight but in power? Max Horkheimer writes: "Whatever seeks to extend itself under domination runs the danger of reproducing it."[9] As I see it, the danger of the Liblice Conference was to *use* Kafka in fundamentally the same (ideological) sense that he was being used

3. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 59. Bahr records the process whereby Kafka was introduced into Czech cultural politics after the conference: the abundance of radio and television programs on him, a socialist version of *The Castle*, numerous approving generalizations from members of state-affiliated writers groups, and speeches by state officials at Kafka's graveside on the 80th anniversary of his birth. "Kafka and the Prague Spring," pp. 24-25.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
9. Horkheimer, "The Authoritarian State," *Telos*, no. 15 (1973), p. 5.

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by state-sponsored critics. This is not to suggest that literature or critics are or should be neutral. No great work of literature or any honest critic is or can be. It is to suggest that literature loses its negative, prophetic, transcending qualities—what Jerald Zaslove calls; "Literature's radical provocation of the terms of existence. . ."[10]—once it becomes the handmaiden of any argument the terms of which it does not define through one's sensitive and critical reading of it. Arguments over literature which involve the state on one side and ideology on both sides are already so heavily stacked against the necessary applicability-free independence of literature that it tends to dissolve into molds which begin to *use it*. In the debate between literature and its use, literature must be given the last word; that word, from my own reading of literature, will include a warning against those who want to save our souls from above using more politicized culture.

My argument is not primarily with the papers given at the conference but rather with its function and the implicit notion behind the conference that it is possible to argue rationally with the state and its henchmen. Here the anarchist tradition can come to our assistance for long ago they perceived that such a notion is both naive and dangerous. It is no irony that the source of insight for the conference participants should be suppressed by them. Hiding away Kafka's interest in and relevance to anarchist thought at the conference and not retrieving it in Liehm's article about the conference is perhaps one minor sign that at least one issue could not enter from either side of the ideological debate. The anxieties of the dominant party become reproduced in both parties.

I want to shift attention now to Kafka himself, his interest in anarchist thought, and the possible relevance of his fiction for an anarchist. I should note in parentheses that of course no direct connection between a writer's conscious interests and his work need exist in order to proceed as I have done. The relationship between writer and work is always there, remarkably so in Kafka, although it is never obvious and usually extremely complex. Kafka spent almost all his working years as a legal consultant for a workman's compensation company established by the Czech state. In this role, he portrays himself as " 'just a bit of waste matter and not even that. I don't fall under the wheels, but only into the cogs of the machine, a mere nothing in the glutinous bureaucracy of the Accident Insurance Institution.' "[11] At work, Kafka was not only a servant of the bureaucracy but also a witness to its victims. His diary and his conversations with Gustav Janouch reveal his active sympathy with the claimants coming to his office and also with his father's employees.

Kafka's father was a central factor in his life; it was from him that the son longed to release himself only to obsessively spend much of his life ruminating over the father. In Kafka's *Letter to His Father*, he writes that his world is divided into three parts, each of which stands in either a positive or negative relation to his father. The first world was one in which "I, the slave, lived under laws that had been invented only for me and which I could, I did not know why, never completely comply with; then the second world, which was infinitely remote from mine, in which you lived, concerned with government, with the issuing of orders and with the annoyance at their not being obeyed; and finally a third world where everybody else lived happily and free from

10. Zaslove, "Counterfeit and the Use of Literature," *West Coast Review*, vol. 3, no. 3 (1969), p. 18.

11. Gustav Janouch, *Conversations with Kafka* (London, 1971), p. 169.

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orders and from having to obey."[12] In this passage, Kafka brings together his own sense of slavery and impossible obedience, and the world of his father—"concerned with government"—who demands obedience. In *The Castle*, which was originally written in the first-person, is again expressed this simultaneous merging of the antagonism between father and son on the psychological, inter-personal and social-political levels. I do *not* think that this merging is simply a matter of Kafka projecting his own sense of slavery and his father's authority onto a social situation. Simple projection would suggest both that Kafka had no interest in or insights into the authoritarian character of his society and also that the authoritarian character didn't exist to be experienced. It is the authority relation that is consistent throughout Kafka's experience because it is consistent throughout his social surroundings from home and father to work and government to culture and its strict definitions of productive behavior.

It should not come as a surprise, then, that Kafka should perceive authority relations and their criticism as being more significant for his own thinking than class or economic or productive relations. The first, in his thinking, is typically primary to the other three. In fact Alex Comfort's conclusions on historical process could understandably be applied to a novel like *The Castle*: "...history, insofar as it is the history of power, is not to be regarded as a steady progress in any direction...but as an oscillation about a fixed point.... We see it as a fluctuating conflict between biological freedom and power" or, as Comfort also argues, between authority and individual responsibility to one's fellow man.[13] Speaking of Kafka, Walter Benjamin makes a similar observation: "Kafka did not consider the age in which he lived as an advance over the beginnings of time. His novels are set in a swamp world."[14] Comfort's analysis in *Art and Social Responsibility*, like Kafka's fiction, shifts the critical emphasis away from class and group and sociologically-perceived structures towards the individual's susceptibility to obedience and barbarism, and his *experience* of authority in every phase of one's life.

This is not to say that outside his fiction, Kafka abandoned the possibility of a radical alternative to his own society. While working on *The Castle* he wrote a brief plan for "The Worker's Society Without Property." In this society all goods and money beyond the personally necessary were to be given to the poor. One's choice of work was to be either personally determined or, if this was not possible, to be determined in consultation with a "work counsellor" who would be in a relation of "trust" to the worker. Each social unit would consist of five-hundred men who, it appears, would be free from any obligation to the Czech state and its laws. There would also be a kind of monastic aura within the society. In the beginning, married men and women would be excluded and participants would lead the most "temperate" lives. Apart from the suggestions of monasticism, which tend to appear frequently in utopian agendas, the plan indicates Kafka's influence by the anarchist tradition of de-centralized direct and voluntary cooperation within small groups, free from the impositions of centralized social and cultural authority.[15]

12. Kafka, *Letter to his Father*, trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins (New York, 1973), p. 29.
13. Alex Comfort, *Art and Social Responsibility* (Vancouver, n.d.), p. 27.
14. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (London, 1973), p. 130.
15. Lee Baxandall, "Kafka and Radical Perspective," *Mosaic*, vol. 3, no. 4 (1970), pp. 78-79.

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This plan was written late in Kafka's life. As early as 1911 and 1912 he was reading the literature of the major 19th century anarchists and socialists and was attending meetings of the libertarian socialist *Klub Mladych* or Club of the Youth. And let us be assured that he *was* reading anarchists such as Bakunin and Kropotkin and others and not writers euphemistically described by Lee Baxandall as "the great Russian pre-Marxist revolutionary theorists."[16] His role at club meetings is described as that of a passive witness, sitting quietly in a corner or collecting donations at the door. In 1912 the police raided the club and Kafka was arrested and fined along with the others. Later the club was suppressed for its " 'anarchist, anti-military and treasonous activities.' "[17] I know of no record of Kafka's reaction to this event although one can easily suppose that it would make complete sense in the light of his reading on the state. It would also confirm the father's attitude toward his son's interests—and the son's attitude towards himself—by way of the father's favorite saying that those who lie with dogs get up with fleas.

I want to cite two more anecdotes which will further illuminate Kafka's interest in anarchism; the first concerns my claim that in Kafka's life-cycle an authoritarian experiential frame is met with at every stage while the second concerns Kafka's own anarchist insights into historical Fascism. Some time after 1920, Janouch and Kafka discussed Kafka's influence by anarchism and several days later, while walking the streets of Prague, Kafka hears the word "ravachol" which touches off a series of interesting associations. The word takes him back to when he was about ten years old—about 1893—when a self-proclaimed French anarchist called Ravachol was very much in the news for various activities including rifling the tomb of a countess, being involved in the murder of a wealthy miser, and blowing up the houses of two French officials who had been influential in the conviction of some anarchist friends. Apparently much of the money stolen from the miser was given by Ravachol, after he escaped from prison, to the families of his friends. Such was mutual aid at the time. Tried and convicted for murdering the hermit, Ravachol greeted the death sentence with a shout of Vive l'Anarchie! and walked to the guillotine singing an anticlerical song.[18] Needless to say, he was a celebrity throughout Europe.

Coming home one day from a fight with school-mates, clothes torn and dirty, Kafka remembers the household cook saying: "You're a ravachol." On asking his parents the meaning of the word, Kafka's father responds: " 'A criminal, a murderer.' " At this point Kafka remarks to Janouch: " 'The knowledge that the cook had recognized a murderer in me paralysed my tongue.' "[19] The father enthusiastically continues with his game of cards while the son creeps "dumbfounded" from the room. " 'The next day I was feverish,' " Kafka tells Janouch. " 'The name ravachol was never spoken again amongst us but it remained within me like a thorn, or rather like a broken-off point of a needle which circulates about the body. The inflammation of the throat disappeared, but subjectively I remained a striken invalid, a ravachol.' "[20] Kafka tells Janouch that he has remained a ravachol until the present time. He says he has studied Ravachol's life. " 'And not only Ravachol's but the lives of various other anarchists. I went deeply into the lives and ideas of Godwin, Proudhon, Stirner, Bakunin,

16. *Ibid.*, p. 73.
17. *Ibid.*
18. George Woodcock, *Anarchism* (New York, 1971), p. 310.
19. Janouch, p. 89.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

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Kropotkin, Tucker and Tolstoy, frequented various circles and meetings, and devoted much time and money to the subject.' "[21]

The second incident again concerns the time after 1920 when Mussolini is taking over Italy. Open on Kafka's desk is a magazine in which appears a photograph of a well-ordered group of revue dancers. Janouch asks Kafka if they are actually dancers. " 'No, they're soldiers,' replied Kafka. 'A revue is a military parade in disguise.' " He continues: " 'Prussian military marches and these girls' dances have the same object. Both suppress the individual. The soldier, like the girl, is no longer a free person, but an organized unit in a group, which obeys a word of command which is fundamentally alien to them. In that way they are the ideal of all commanding officers. Nothing has to be explained, nothing improvised. The word of command is enough. The soldier and the girl both parade like puppets. This endows their commander, who himself is insignificant, with greatness.' " After pointing to a picture of Mussolini who he calls a " 'cheap comedian' " and a " 'genuine ringmaster,' " Kafka points to another picture in the magazine *Die Woche* which shows marchers on their way to Rome. " 'Look at their faces!' " Kafka says. " 'They are true as steel because they have no need to think and yet they are convinced that in Rome fat livings and over-flowing pots are waiting for them. Mussolini's men are not revolutionaries, they are only rebels stretching out their hands for the dishes which they can't fill for themselves.' "[22]

These facts about and reflections by Kafka are worth remembering in the light of the omissions in Liehm's account and the anxiety with which they are handled *wherever* people are interested in Kafka. Max Brod, who has written the most commonly-used biography of Kafka, claims that he did not find out about Kafka's involvement in the *Klub Mladych* until after Kafka's death[23] even though Janouch quotes Kafka as saying Brod sometimes went to the club with him " 'though he had little sympathy' " with it.[24] Nor does Brod admit awareness of the extent of Kafka's reading in anarchist literature. He makes only the most oblique references to both facts and prefers to close off interest by avoidance. In a relatively recent, extensive, and much quoted study of Kafka's action, Heinz Politzer calls Kafka's interest in anarchism "significant and problematical" and then devotes all of two pages to the problem.[25] He resolves to call Kafka a "metaphysical anarchist" which, although containing some truth regarding Kafka's later life, tends to obscure the immediacy of the anarchists' influence on Kafka.[26]

One aspect of Politzer's argument is important in that it represents another common —this time Western—ideological mis-handling of Kafka's fiction. Arguing that in his fiction Kafka used the situations of the material world as metaphors for dealing with a personally more important metaphysical reality, Politzer claims that Kafka "criticized the invisible authorities of the universe by taking the secular powers to task."[27] But neither the autobiographical material nor the fiction confirms the kind of inversion Politzer wants. Such an inversion suggests, for example, that both Kafka and the K. of *The Castle* have such powers of resistance against their given social worlds that they

21. *Ibid.*, p. 90.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.
23. Max Brod, *Franz Kafka: A Biography* (New York, 1960), p. 86.
24. Janouch, p. 90.
25. Politzer, *Franz Kafka: Parable and Paradox* (Ithaca, 1962), pp. 119-120.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 360.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

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can treat experience of these worlds as mere material for the super-human issues at hand. Kafka possessed no such powers of resistance and K. does not even consider the issue. Kafka did despair over the fact that he was forced in his fiction to use metaphors gleaned from the experience of the social-material world. This would suggest that, as an author, he saw the worlds of his fiction as means towards the understanding or illumination of experience beyond or outside the world-as-metaphor. Yet this begs the question of why an author should choose a particular "metaphor" and, if *The Castle* is to be read for its autobiographical implications, the distinction between the metaphor and the "other" begins to collapse. Or, to put this in another form, Kafka's inner or subjective torment can be seen as a consequence of the social world from which he has become so alien that this world now appears as metaphor. The issue is not what object is a metaphor for what actuality but rather how consistently the experiential frames of Kafka's fictions can each be used as metaphor *or* as actuality for each other. The underground construction of *The Burrow* could be a metaphor for the structure of the villagers' ideology in *The Castle* just as the torture-device found in *In the Penal Colony* could be a metaphor for the thinking behind the underground labyrinth or the great wall of China be a paradigmatic metaphor of the villagers' ideology.

In Kafka's society and the individual's life within it, experiences repeat themselves *ad nauseam* because the authoritarian pattern is repeated throughout: child and family, son and father, worker and boss and-or organization, citizen and state and-or leadership, individual and group, student and teacher, soldier and officer, impulse and conscience, self and culture, critic and ideology, man and God. Of course no state-sponsored literary criticism could respond adequately to such a writer! Nor could any critic who has a heavy investment in the preservation of relations based on power respond, in a conscious sense, any more adequately. After Kafka the question is not what kind of power relations are historically necessary but rather what ways can we best live without these relations and preserve ourselves against their recurrence. This requires a radical shift in emphasis away from an analysis based on class and an approving indulgence in cultural changes sponsored from "above," to a type of analysis in which individual character and experience is given primary importance. If authority is the issue, individual responsibility *outside* all power struggles is the only beginning of non-authoritarian social relations.

In *The Castle* there are actually very few signs of any coercion from above. Coercion in that novel comes both from within each villager and each bureaucrat and hence, as K. experiences it, from outside or the villagers' world-view. The state of things is within each villager whereas the state itself seems to have almost disappeared. In a sense, and perhaps our future is outlined here, the people have become the state: the teacher trains the young aided by parents who indulge in the delusion; the bureaucrats believe in an apparently non-existent or at least incompetent authority system—possible authority figures are constantly seen sleeping, sick, powerless, confused and-or inept—and are believed in their beliefs; and the villagers endlessly defend the system against K.'s perceptive questioning. If one is looking for an analogue outside *The Castle* for the world with which it deals, it can hardly be found in the hierarchical state systems of the East, where ideology stands behind the police, or the West, where the police stand behind ideology. Rather the analogue can be found within each obedient citizen whose life makes the state and its police redundant. Those who are criticized in Liehm's account seem to have already settled peacefully in the village although there are signs—the GDR delegate who said he could not speak

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freely—that the process is not complete for some and can be undone.

In a passage which sounds remarkably similar to several of K.'s own comments, Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno observed in 1944 that the Fascist leaders are not supermen but rather "functions" of their own propaganda machine, "the focal points at which identical reactions of countless citizens interact. In the psychology of the modern masses, The Fuhrer is not so much the father-figure as a collective and overexaggerated projection of the powerless ego of each individual—to which the so-called 'leaders' in fact respond."[28] Yet *The Castle* suggests a situation which even post-dates this description for there is no functioning machine and no visible leaders. The Fuhrer reigns inside the villagers or, as Kafka told Janouch: " 'We all live as if each of us were a dictator.' "[29] It is this center of power in each villager that K. repeatedly and "ignorantly" intrudes upon.

K.'s ignorance is made much of in *The Castle*; the Herrenhof landlady typically remarks that K.'s ignorance of the "local situation" is appalling. Being alien, K. serves to alienate both the villagers and our view of the villagers by his insistent responsible questioning, his strange appearance, and his persistent desire to do the unthinkable. K. perceives the village and the castle with the senses and mind of the uninitiated. Unlike the villagers, we cannot feel at home in the disaster of the village because K. does not feel at home. Familiarity is self-validating but K.'s strangeness makes it difficult for the reader of *The Castle* to acquiesce to the villagers' well-coordinated conventionalism.

Thus *The Castle*, through the entry of K., attempts to break through the surfaces of the authoritarian character structure of the villagers. Alienation, in this novel, is the handmaiden of insight. In part, the "castle" that K. unwittingly wishes to enter is the mode of thinking of the villagers. His intention is to find a home; yet the passage through the villagers' ideology proves so consistently irrational that he cannot settle down, cannot feel satisfied, cannot *be* satisfied. To be so would require an acquiescence to unfreedom, to join the men who " 'prefer to hide behind the prison bars which they build around themselves.' "[30] Not that K. is not constantly making concessions to the villagers' harangues. He concedes much, far too much, and yet the pressures on him to do so are enormous—like the deep layer of snow in the village through which he wearily wanders and into which he would like to collapse. The reader of *The Castle* also becomes a witness to the dynamics of acquiescence; it is perhaps this aspect of the novel which could be read most rewardingly by those who had hopes for Liblice. So K.'s life in the village is one of resistance, questioning, defeats, acquiescence, and renewed questioning. The more mystified the castle becomes, the more obsessed with it does K. become. There is perhaps created in every K. a wish to be a Klamm, the powerful Klamm of one's fantasies. Oedipus, too, became a leader of men. Here, surely, there are lessons which refer to Liblice—that well-intentioned attempt to war with authority on *its* own terms. Through a critical reading, *The Castle* suggests that an obstinate resistance to acquiescence and to indulgence in the fantasies of power within and around us—the great refusal latent in this novel—is the only possibility where insanity is the norm, where the Fuhrer has been taken back into self and holds court with guilt over our future.

28. Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972), p. 236.
29. Janouch, p. 126.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

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# REVIEWS:

Stanley Aronowitz. *Food, Shelter, and the American Dream.* New York: Seabury, 1974. 188 pages.

Left-wing story-telling relates an incident immediately following the Cuban revolution. Fidel was holding court with the July 26th movement in order to form a ruling apparatus. The meeting was taking a long time and Ché fell into a doze. Just then Fidel in an effort to fill the Minister of Finance post asked: "Is there anyone here who is an economist?" Ché, being half asleep, thought that Fidel had asked if anyone there was a Communist and raised his hand. Fidel immediately appointed him to the Economics post. Stanley Aronowitz's new book makes one wonder if the decision to write and publish this book came from a similar circumstance. The book's self-proclaimed purpose is to analyze the forces underlying the food and energy crises and to focus on the economic, political and social consequences of these crises in a manner which Aronowitz acknowledges is essentially analytic and speculative. I would underline the latter. For the purposes of review the book shall be broken down into three sections: (a) the food and energy crises, (b) the dynamics and crisis of the American economy, and (c) the effect of the current crisis. Aronowitz masterfully weaves these subjects together but hopefully it is not too much of an injustice to deal with them individually.

Aronowitz's analyses of food and energy are pretty much standard fare for radical literature on the subject. Essentially it is a problem of monopoly. The oil companies simultaneously forced out independent refiners and marketers and purposely kept down refinery capacity in order to force higher prices; and the agri-business corporations, having completed vertical integration in the sixties, similarly forced higher prices in the seventies. Not wrong but not the whole story either. Regarding energy, Aronowitz claims that the oil companies encouraged the Middle East producer nations to raise their prices and implies that the American government was party to the conspiracy so as to increase U.S. economic power vis-a-vis its European and Japanese rivals—witness the rapid strength of the dollar following the October 1973 Middle East war. The chief beneficiaries of the price increases are not the Arab nations but the multinational oil firms who supposedly are still in control of the oil fields due to management, construction, processing, distribution and marketing skills.

It is quite true that the oil companies have done well by recent price increases—the top five oil firms' profits in 1973 were $6.2 billion compared to $3.8 billion in 1972. Yet, even if the oil monopolies made profits of up to one dollar a barrel this hardly compares with the ten dollar and over per barrel collected by the producer nations. To claim that the chief beneficiaries of the price increases were not the Arabs but the oil companies is to fly in the face of reality. To maintain that the oil producers are dependent on the oil companies for certain technical skills is only half true. The oil nations have much greater leverage in bargaining for these skills and their efforts to make bilateral agreements with Europe and Japan cannot be taken lightly. By ignoring the recent power changes in the oil industry, Aronowitz is guilty of putting the cart (distribution) before the horse (ownership). The most shaky of Aronowitz's claims is that the U.S. government joined together with the international oil companies and the oil producing countries to increase oil prices. Oil prices have played havoc with Western economies—the cost of oil has increased $20-25 billion for the U.S. alone. To maintain that the U.S. consciously chose such a crisis is to see conspiracy where there is

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only contradiction (i.e., the changing patterns of imperialism and the decline of American hegemony).

Dealing with U.S. agriculture, Aronowitz is on firmer ground and this may be due to the use of work done by the Union of Radical Political Economists. One does not have to look too hard to see that the family farm has all but disappeared. In the heyday of 19th century Populism, almost all farmers were ranged against big business; today, the dominating elements in agriculture are big business. In 1870, over half of the American people were engaged in agriculture. By 1930, fewer than a quarter were. Today the number is under five percent. One percent of all farms produced twenty-five percent of total farm output in 1972 and these agricultural corporations contracted with smaller farms for much of their production. Needless to say, the Jeffersonian dream of an agrarian democracy is not even remembered these days. Aronowitz observes these trends and claims that the 20.6 percent jump in food prices in the fifteen months between June 1972 and September 1973 was due to the increased monopolization of the industry. The U.S. government is also indicted in that only in 1974 did the government cease to pay "farmers" not to grow crops (in 1973 the bill was over $3 billion). Aronowitz mentions that the Soviet wheat deal was a catalyst for pushing up food prices and that the U.S. balance of payments problems caused the government to encourage export of food with the obvious consequence of forcing price rises at home. My only quarrel with Aronowitz's analysis is that he doesn't give enough stress to these factors. For example, American farm exports increased by sixty percent in 1972. While the food industry has become a bastion of monopoly power, the causes of the current round of food price increases may not be primarily the result of increased monopolization but rather due to the above named "extraneous" factors.

From energy and food we jump along with Aronowitz to his interpretation of the general economic crisis. His analysis is surrealist in that its primary characteristic is all power to the imagination. In one place Aronowitz claims that the current economic crisis was induced by the Eastern corporate powers (Rockefellers, Du Ponts, Mellons, etc.) in order to wipe out the Cowboy capitalists. But he quickly changes horses and speaks of a more generalized economic crisis. His main thesis is that the United States is undergoing a reversal into a second class economic power due to its transformation from a goods-producing country to a service society. Runaway shops are said to be the wave of the future although evidence seems lacking to indicate any substantial move in that direction. Aronowitz gives emphasis to the emergence of Europe and Japan as viable economies and claims that inter-imperialist rivalry threatens the U.S. manufacturing structure and existing wage rates.

We, unlike Chicken Little, are not able to shout out "the sky is falling down" as the money wage (which is the relevant variable in international trade) in West Germany and Japan has been rising considerably faster than productivity. Between 1956 and 1968, output per man-hour (productivity) in the United States, Germany and Japan rose by 53 percent, 92 percent and 147 percent respectively. Money wages per man-hour, on the other hand, rose by 55 percent in the U.S., 147 percent in West Germany and 209 percent in Japan. The present economic difficulties might be better explained as being due to the dislocative effects and strains in capital accumulation caused by increased oil prices combined with a natural downturn of the business cycle possibly exaggerated due to its being postponed until the end of the Vietnam war. Such is not the stuff sweeping theory is made of but it may be a little closer to reality.

Aronowitz's analysis of the social and political situation are, of course, predicated

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on severe economic decline. Not finding much reason to sustain such a judgement it will be difficult to deal with his treatment of the social implications. Aronowitz claims the culture of plenty is over. For Americans the good times are past and shortages are the norm. We are in for a life of hard times. American capitalism has entered a "crisis of legitimacy" since it was previously sustained on the basis of its ability to "deliver the goods." American liberalism can only collapse given the economic situation according to Aronowitz and in fact he sees that happening now. It is true that recent events (both political and economic) have nakedly exposed ideologies of pluralism but we should not imagine that Americans had previously fallen hook, line and sinker for pluralist ideology. Legitimation is a lot more complicated than people believing or not believing in pluralism. The cultural aspects of motivation, life style and communication patterns make legitimation a much deeper and more serious question than those that vulgarize Habermas seem to realize. Aronowitz goes so far as to maintain that the cynicism, privatization and the rejection of official electoral and trade-union politics which are prevalent in America indicate a conscious rejection of dominant ideologies and form the basis for new types of political activity. Might not these attitudes indicate resignation and passivity? Probably it is something in between and only through meaningful praxis-investigation-communication will we be able to better understand the present mood.

For Aronowitz everything is crystal clear. Legitimation has completely broken down and "bourgeois rule is no longer sustained by ideology but by the sheer exercise of power." Authoritarian rule is emerging in America. Since "the pervasive enemy can no longer be located in the rhetoric of the 'red peril' or the 'yellow peril'. . . . the preponderance of efforts by government and the corporations will be directed toward the elimination of internal sources of opposition." Aronowitz claims we are on the road to "friendly fascism." One of the few examples that he gives of such a development is the difficulty left-wing authors have in getting their work published. Yet judging by the publishing of this book it seems more likely that "repressive tolerance" is still in vogue.

*Simon Rosenblum*

C.P. Kindelberger. *The World in Depression.* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973.

This is a book about the present crisis of the American system seen through the great 1929 crisis. Kindelberger analyzes the great depression in order to find its causes and locate remedies for the ills of the past—remedies to be utilized today as well. In other words this book is only apparently dealing with the past: in reality, it is a book about the present crisis of American and world capitalism.

The book begins with an outline of the major accounts of the origins of the crisis: Friedmann's thesis according to which the crisis could have been avoided by means of a more careful monetary policy, and Samuelson's thesis according to which the crisis was the product of accidental events. The only value of Kindelberger's volume is to have shown the untenability of Friedmann's thesis (pp. 300ff.). As for the rest we are confronted with an updating of Samuelson's "accidental" thesis.

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According to Kindelberger, the root of the crisis was in the lack of economic leadership at a world-wide level (p. 28 and p. 78): English leadership ended in 1913 and the U.S. did not want to accept the heritage (p. 292). Furthermore, within the American economy, ignorance also is seen to have made a difference in the particular dynamics of the U.S. depression. (p. 276). With accidental factors such as the unwillingness of a country to accept the role of world leadership, and economic ignorance, Kindelberger seeks to explain an historical cornerstone: why the U.S. did not want to assume world economic leadership. Why were Americans ignorant in economic matters? Kindelberger remains silent and from this viewpoint the volume reveals itself for what it really is: not a scientific analysis but a descriptive summary of data which never succeeds in providing a picture of the real and fundamental causes of phenomena. It is a piece of economic journalism not altogether without inaccuracies.[1]

Yet Kindelberger's superficiality has a precise "ideological" foundation in the Marxian sense: for Kindelberger the ills of capitalism are always curable. What is needed to guarantee development without crisis is adequate world leadership. This altogether unsubstantiated ideological posture is the result of a clear effort to provide an apology for capitalism. In order to lend this effort some appearance of truth, Kindelberger cites an enormous mass of data and figures which, however, deal with economic phenomena of a superstructural variety (money, banks, exchange and international relations). Structural problems (production) are hardly touched. Thus, on pages 193-4, Hensen's stagnation theses are hurriedly dismissed (Hensen bases his account on an investigation of the level of production): there were no tendencies towards overproduction, other than in some countries and sectors. Yet, an analysis of the structure of the American economy during that period readily reveals that the signs of over-production were increasingly more evident: during the 1919-1929 period labor productivity grew by 43% and wages only 11%, while prices remained substantially unchanged. In 1929, the highest 10% of the U.S. population received 39% of the national income, which is one of the highest levels of this century. Social disparities grew, capital increasingly accumulated while the masses' ability to consume did not grow proportionately: thus, we have over-production. A yet clearer indicator of this tendency is the amount of consumers' debts which in 1929 reached exceptional figures of 30.3% of consumers' personal income. After the war this ceiling was surpassed but in the meantime the U.S. economy had significantly broadened its base and was thus able to withstand heavier burdens. Similarly interesting is the dynamic of utilization of industrial plants: during the 1919 crisis it fell to 65% subsequently to rise to 94% in 1923, whereas in subsequent years it slowly fluctuated. Thus, during the period 1927-29 the average wage was 82.7% (83% 82% and 83% for the three respective years) whereas for the three years before (1924-27) it was 88%. At the wake of the crisis there was an erosion of the rate of utilization of plants which indicates something very simple: there was excessive accumulation and investment in relation to a market whose ability to absorb was gradually decreasing—again over-production.

The great stock-market crash took place in a period when the American economy was red-hot, and since during the first weeks of the crisis investors lost about 40 billion dollars, it is easy to see how this led to a rapid contraction of the already worn ability to

1. Thus, on p. 241, he holds that in 1934 the corporative State in Italy was already in an advanced state of construction. It is well known in Italy, however, that the corporative experience was still on paper—as it was admitted after the war by Bottai himself, who was the fascist theoretician of corporativism.

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consume. The great crash was not the cause of the crisis, but an accelerating factor of it in the previously described structural context.

It is clear that a crisis of this type hitting a country which had by that time become central in the world capitalist equilibrium, had to have heavy repercussions at the international level, thus exploding the old contradictions lingering on from the post-WWI period. This type of discourse questioning the antagonistic structure of American capitalism (and of capitalism in general) is altogether absent from Kindelberger's book, whose political-ideological option goes in an altogether different direction.

Yet, the validity of the interpretation of the crisis as a result of over-production is confirmed by the subsequent evolution of the U.S. economy. The Roosevelt administration was not able to overcome the great crisis with welfare expenditures (in 1937 the situation seemed once again ready to deteriorate) and only the war with the new opportunities for investments (military expenditures) allowed a solution to the problem. Military expenditures re-routed investments towards an inexhaustible market (due to rapid technological obsolescence) which absorbed enormous amounts of capital (up to 10% of the American GN—). Furthermore, the tools of death, by using very sophisticated technologies, cost much more than the tools of life; the construction of supersonic bombers absorbs much more capital than the construction of schools and hospitals.[2]

Military expenditures revitalize vast industrial sectors producing employment and income, which generate new demand for consumer goods: the whole mechanism is re-engaged. Yet, there is a minor time-lag. Military expenditures utilize very advanced technologies which eventually tend to become generalized over the whole system. The case of computers is well-known. Created for military reasons during World War II, they have become widespread throughout the whole productive system during the last 30 years. It meant the revolution of automation which in a capitalist system poses enormous problems concerning employment. But mass technological unemployment in relation to growing productive capacities means the reappearance of the old specter of overproduction in new forms. This can be seen from the rapid growth of consumers' debts whose volume during the last few years is even higher than the American GNP. Here Galbraith's proposal to substitute military expenditures with space-exploration expenditures would not resolve the problem: the latter are a special type of military expenditure and present the same indicated inconveniences.

Thus, at the end of the '60s, the U.S. economy finds itself with the dramatic problems of surplus which were thought to have been resolved. The crisis of the dollar and its devaluation in relation to strong Western currencies are a clear effort to defend a market which is increasingly becoming saturated, from the intromission of rather bothersome imperialist partners (particularly German and Japanese).

All of recent economic history validates the proposed line of interpretation and, to return to the 1920s, it seems clear that at that time only a policy of military expenditures could have prevented an economic crisis by creating additional investment areas. But even if admitting that the U.S. ruling class led by Hoover was

2. This is even acknowledged by Galbraith in *The New Industrial State*. In relatively small countries such as Sweden where the amount of wealth to be absorbed is less, the welfare model can function to a certain extent. When, however, it is necessary to recycle in the productive process 80 to 100 billions each year as in the U.S., then the greater absorptive ability of the military is decisive.

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aware of the seriousness of the situation (which was not the case) it would not have been possible to concretely implement such a remedy.

Initially, a policy of military expenditures implies a certain containment of consumption (subsequently the economic upturn can also involve the sector of consumer goods), and therefore sacrifice both on the part of consumers as well as on the part of industries in the secondary industrial sector. In the optimistic and consumerist bourgeois-democratic U.S. of 1928-1929 there was no administration which could have found a consensus for such a policy. In fact, military expenditures could not have been justified with any danger of immediate war: no one threatened the U.S. (at that time the USSR was a weak and isolated country). Furthermore, a militaristic American policy would have had negative consequences in relations with imperialist partners thus rendering international relations (both on the political as well as on the commercial level) inherited from World War I even more complicated. At any rate, no bourgeois class can admit that the system stands, and can only stand, on the production of more "profitable" instruments of death rather than relying on civilian expenditures which are much more useful from the viewpoint of the average citizen. Such an admission would conflict with a fundamental goal that a bourgeois democratic government must seek: maintain a consensus in the system. This is why the policy of military expenditures has always been presented as necessary in order to defend the "free" world from external enemies. Thus, even an administration more sophisticated than Hoover's would not have been able to save the U.S. from the great depression.

Could a world government of the economy have reversed the course of events, as Kindelberger suggests? Absolutely not. First of all, no world government has ever won over the causes of economic crises: the English world government found itself confronted with the great crisis of 1907, and its economic predominance did not prevent the unleashing of a ferocious imperialist competition which eventually resulted in the world-war. Thus, it does not seem that world governments are a magic formula to prevent either political or economic crises. The U.S. world government which came about after World War II and lasted up to the '60's was not able to prevent the 1957-8 recession which represents the most relevant pause in the post-war boom, up to the present crisis. But the very contradictions which are now exploding are not a sudden and unexplainable disease. They are rooted in the apparently "governed" development of the past: it is well-known, for instance, that the difficulties in the U.S. balance of payment began to manifest themselves in relation with foreign expenditures needed to meet the threat of the Vietnam revolution. This revolution, however, is the answer to an imperialist policy which the U.S. has followed in that zone, at least since 1954.

Economic and political examples could be multiplied. The notion of a "world government" is an empty formula: every government must pursue a policy and it is then a matter of examining what policy today a world government (based on the U.S.) could carry out to solve the crisis. According to Kindelberger (p. 232 and p. 275) the world market for certain goods would have to be left open, and it would be necessary to facilitate the discount of international debts during periods of economic difficulties. As it can be seen, the recipe for a world government is very simple. The problem however, is that it is not clear how these remedies could solve the problem of over-production: at the U.S. and world level, this problem has structural roots which can be solved only at that level. If today the market for durable consumer goods is

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saturated and military expanditures no longer produce the earlier positive effects (rather, they contribute to the stagnation of the already compromised levels of employment) the problem can only be resolved by discovering a "new mechanism of development," i.e., a new type of goods to mass produce in order to satisfy a new demand while being profitable to the enterprises. Yet, no one has discovered this new mechanism, nor does Kindelberger say anything about it: his proposals presuppose that there is already an economy able to develop and recover from the crisis. When the economic mechanism is exhausted and no new ones come into being, the shadow of Hensen's secular stagnation re-emerges, and it does not help to put forth Kindelberger's proposals. When no one knows how and what to produce in order to uphold the old levels of production and well-being, to facilitate the discount of debts and to keep the market open is not too helpful.

Kindelberger's proposals are laughable. Yet, behind his apparent candor hides something else. The task of bringing about the economic world government cannot be left to small countries representing, according to Kindelberger, private and egoistic interests, but to great powers, i.e., the U.S. (p. 266). In other words, we are confronted with a clear re-assertion, in the face of the crisis of the U.S. imperialist role as the economic policeman of the world (in addition to being the political-military policeman). It is true that Kindelberger claims that no country should pursue a policy of impoverishing neighbors (p. 26) but it remains that the U.S. and other countries have always pursued such a policy which has ineliminable structural roots. Kindelberger's ignorance in matters of economic history (and of the history of imperialism) is too obvious to be taken seriously. In reality, since the policy of domination of the stronger is an essential consequence of imperialism, to re-propose the role of government of great powers (i.e., the U.S.) corresponds objectively to supporting the U.S. tendency, expressed with the dollar crisis, to pass the costs of the world crisis centered in the U.S. on to weaker imperialist countries and on poor countries.

The ideological exaltation of U.S. imperialism finds its rationalization in the expression of the private and egoistic character of the interests pursued by weaker countries on the world market. On the other hand, the great power dominating the market, does so in the public interest of the stability of the world system. Since the great power is rich and powerful, it can also be altruistic. It could be said, following Calvin, that the lack of economic success hits the sinners: those whom the Lord condemns for their guilt. This laughable ideolization of capital is not new: Kindelberger merely transposes on the international level the famous expression that what is good for GM is good for the U.S. For Kindelberger what is good for the U.S. is good for the world. The justification is always the same: GM is so large that its interests are U.S. interests. For Kindelberger the U.S. is so great and powerful that it can guarantee a public management of the world economy. The U.S. is the world, or at least its economic conscience.

The fact that the history of the last two centuries shows that stronger nations (including the U.S.) have never represented public interests, but only the private interests of the strongest and most oppressive, does not seem to bother Kindelberger very much. Colonialism and imperialism, with their history of horrors, do not concern Kindelberger: the U.S. is the world's public conscience: the small and poor Vietnamese people represent an interest vulgarly egoistic—that of freedom and self-determination.

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If we were to be governed by this "public" conscience at the level of Chicago gangsters, there would be rough times ahead for the world. Fortunately, however, things are not so. Kindelberger's book expresses a real need of the U.S. empire (the reassertion of U.S. world domination) which the U.S. does not have the power to bring about. The U.S. economic crisis is radical and profound, and it is qualitatively different from that of the 1930's. First the hot war, and then the cold war and the alleged necessity to prevent and discourage Russian aggressions even during the phase of co-existence, have allowed the U.S. ruling class to credibly utilize the solution of military expenditures. Now that means is worn out and new ones are not around. Thus, the U.S. does not know how to solve the crisis. The confusion in the academic world (what Sweezy calls "Keynesian chickens"), the nonsense that is continually written, and the very success of as inconsistent and empty a book such as Kindelberger's are the theoretical otherness of the security of the American crisis.

A less evident indicator is the re-emergence of neo-isolationist theories. Apparently these are realistic positions: if we do not have the power to defend the empire, let us lock ourselves at home. As it turns out, however, the U.S. economy has interests on the world level: the American home is the world and its wealth has to be defended at that level.

Yet, neo-isolationist positions have the same historical matrix as Kindelberger's thesis: the crisis of the U.S. empire, in front of which Kindelberger proposes the re-assertion of imperialist hegemony, while the neo-isolationists seek the re-dimensioning of an indefensible system. The first emphasizes the "necessarily" world-wide role of the U.S. economy, while the second focuses on the impossibility to continue as the world's policeman. Both are right: the U.S. economy has world-wide dimensions and this condemns the U.S. to a world role which now (and in the future) it does not have the power to play. This contradiction encapsulates the drama and the decline of the U.S.

*Antonio Carlo*

Oscar Anweiler. *The Soviets: The Russian Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Councils, 1905-1921.* Translated by Ruth Hein. New York: Pantheon, 1975. 337 pages. $15.00.

This long overdue translation of Oscar Anweiler's *Die Rätebewegung in Russland* (1958) is a welcome one not only because so little exists in English on the Russian soviets and their relation to the Bolshevik Party's theory and practice, but because so much mystification exists on the Left concerning this relationship. Anweiler's book begins to lay the basis for a critical history of Bolshevism and the soviets as *political* institutions of revolutionary democracy. (The counterparts of the soviets in the economic sphere, the workers' councils, receive only skimpy and inadequate treatment.)[1] If the work falls short, as it ultimately does, it is because it remains too

1. However, they play a mythical role in Anweiler's polemic at the end of the book.

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much at the level of formal institutional history, especially after 1917. Because of Anweiler's own ambivalent commitment as to the possibility of socialist transformation and radical popular democracy, he fails to concretely analyze the history of the Russian revolutionary movement as a whole from the perspective of a *theory* of the transition to socialism. Hence, the real possibilities and the real constraints on the soviet movement, both internal and external, are never adequately dealt with. The concrete constellation of classes in Russian society almost never informs his analyses or his political judgements. In the end, the only historical actors seem to be parties, political philosophies and disembodied soviet institutions whose actual historical potential in revolutionary Russia is alternately belittled or unjustifiably romanticized, depending on whether Anweiler is uncritically espousing against the Bolsheviks a Social Revolutionary Chernovian line or a Left Oppositionist or Anarchist one. But this is going too fast.

The most salient feature of the soviet movement of 1905 is its spontaneity. While a revolutionary tradition of workers' and soldiers' councils existed in Europe, from the soldiers' councils of Cromwell's army to the forms of radical democracy in the various French revolutionary movements, and while a theoretical tradition of anti-authoritarian, anti-statist forms of decentralized democracy was present in the works of Proudhon, Bakunin and (although ambivalently) Marx,[2] there was no direct connection between these and the workers' formation of soviets in 1905. Lacking a tradition of legal workers' parties and established trade unions, the first soviets were formed to fill the gap in the struggle for very concrete demands: an eight-hour day, an end to political repression, the granting of broad civil and political liberties, and especially the formation of a Constituent Assembly with more than advisory powers and elected by universal, direct and secret ballot. The historical roots of the soviets lay in the various forms of paternalistic and bureaucratic workers' representation which the Tsarist government began to allow as the workers' movement reached new heights at the turn of the century. The Petrograd Soviet was partly formed from the workers' delegates elected to the government-sponsored Shidlovsky Commission, formed to investigate the causes of worker dissatisfaction leading to the protest of Bloody Sunday. Menshevik propaganda for a "workers' congress" and "revolutionary self-government" (still within the context of a bourgeois revolution) also propelled the soviet movement forward. But on the whole, the aims of the movement remained

2. Anweiler correctly points to Marx's ambivalence on such matters, an ambivalence which later Marxists such as Lenin inherited and which the Marxist movement has yet to fully come to grips with. Marx, in his 1850 Address to the Central Authority of the Communist League, for instance, calls for independent proletarian municipal councils and workers' committees as dyarchical forms of power, but in the same address says: "the workers must strive...for a clear cut centralization of power in the hands of the state authority. They must not let themselves be led astray by democratic talk of communal liberties, self-government and the like." (Quoted by Anweiler, p. 15. All further references to this work will simply be given in brackets.) This contradiction persisted in Marx: he simultaneously praised the *form* of the Paris Commune and its proposals for the reorganization of France along radically democratic and decentralized lines and condemned Proudhonist federalism which was the ideological inspiration for the Commune in the first place. Engels tried to save face for scientific socialism by saying that it was not Proudhonist principles but "practical needs," which inspired the commune—as if Proudhon's influence on the French workers' movement had not been the ideological basis for the interpretation of these practical needs! The Commune was, of course, neither politically nor theoretically Marx's work, and Bakunin was perhaps not that far off the mark when he accused Marx of usurping the Commune to save face in the International.

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limited, its structure based on expediency. Most soviets, including those in Petrograd and Moscow, had little intention of becoming the bases of revolutionary self-government, and where they did assume limited governmental functions it was only due to the necessity of continuing the general strike or, as in Moscow, the desperate insurrection against government repression. But, if the aims of the soviets remained limited and largely tied to the granting of concrete concessions by the government, a tradition was created which would become the basis of the "soviet myth," to be revived in the next revolution.

February, 1917 was again a spontaneous upheaval. Where it differed from 1905 was that the soviets were set up this time at the initiative of a handful of socialist leaders after the democratic revolution had already been assured. Here Anweiler locates one of the bases for the future dictatorship *over* the soviets—the drive of the intellectuals to dominate the masses, although it is never clear whether he recognizes a legitimate distinction between domination and leadership, a lapse which often muddles his argument on Lenin's relationship to the soviets. Anweiler himself admits that once the soviets were set up, they became a very sensitive barometer of the moods of the masses, who exercised their power of election and recall, ultimately granting the Bolsheviks a majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets. But he still considers them abnormal forms of democratic power, completely unfit to govern and considerably inferior to parliamentary forms.[3]

That the soviets were "imperfect," that their congresses were never fully representative of the "toiling masses," is beyond dispute. But Anweiler's discussion of the concrete possibilities of socialist revolutionary self-government is a striking failure because, first, he never fully analyzes the internal dynamics and consciousness of the workers' movement from 1917 on, especially at the level of the factory. He considers the lack of strong trade unions and legal political parties to be important, but unfortunately does not ask what effect these might have had on the possibilities of revolutionary self-government, and, most importantly, on the forms of organization and consciousness of the workers' movement after February. An analysis of Russia in light of the Spanish workers' movement culminating in 1936-39 would suggest that, in comparison, the latter was able to rapidly generalize the struggle for self-management because of its long tradition of anarchism, and because its major trade union federation, the CNT, had deep roots in the workers' communities as well as a relatively non-bureaucratic structure. In contrast, the Russian workers' political and trade union mevements, forced to live an underground existence for most of their history and hence cut off from the daily lives of the mass of workers, and laboring under the statist ideology of the Marxism of that epoch, had much weaker basis upon which to build a revolutionary democracy when new possibilities opened up in February, 1917.[4]

Anweiler's second main failure is that he never analyzes the mode of production in the Russian countryside, the consciousness and forms of organization of the peasantry in view of the possibilities for social transformation and not merely electoral representation in a national parliament. Third, he never analyzes any of the reasons for the continued failure of the Social Revolutionary and Menshevik parties to provide any alternative solutions to the current crises, and, in line with this, he is extremely

3. At one point (p. 112), he favorable quotes a description of them as "a permanent riot."

4. For an interesting analysis of the self-activity of the Russian working class, with special emphasis on its internal divisions along skill and sex lines, see Chris Goodey, "Factory Committees and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," *Critique* (Autumn, 1974), 27-47.

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naive about the political possibilities of the Constituent Assembly.[5]

One of the foremost merits of Anweiler's book is its systemmatic treatment of Lenin's theory and practice *vis-à-vis* the soviets. In contrast to the recently popular view that with the 1905 revolution Lenin abandoned the authoritarianism latent in his earlier views on the Party, only to return to it under the pressure of historical circumstances somewhere after mid-1918 or so,[6] Anweiler demonstrates the limits of the soviets' effect on Lenin's theory. While the spontaneous revolutionary soviet movement of 1905 forced Lenin to make room for such organs in his thinking, he never systematically incorporated into his theory a principled commitment to democratic soviets. Between 1907 and 1917 he made almost no attempt to develop his ideas on the soviets, and hence it is no accident that the Party educated by Lenin over that decade was again befuddled by their appearance. This is no surprise, given the role the party played in his thinking through most of his life, and given that he did not begin to challenge the typical statist assumptions of the Marxism of German Social Democracy until Bukharin's work pressured him to do so in 1916.[7] In 1907, with the ebb of the revolutionary tide, Lenin spoke of the soviets on two different occasions: "such bodies can actually prove superfluous if the Social Democratic party understands how to organize its work among the proletarian masses properly, efficiently, and sweepingly;" and "the soviets of workers' deputies and their union are essential to the victory of the insurrection. The victorious insurrection will of necessity create other instruments." (quoted pp. 84-5)

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5. For instance, the Menshevik's and Social Revolutionaries' departure from the Second All-Russian Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets, which formally transferred power to the soviets after the armed uprising, is simply called a "tactical error" (p. 194), as if this did not reveal their own commitment to the possibility of beginning a democratic socialist transformation (more so of the Social Revolutionaries because of their ideological and material ties to the western imperialist powers, to national chauvinism and especially to the peasantry; the Mensheviks soon came to support soviet power, but continually pressed to real democratic popular controls against Bolshevik dictatorship). Had these parties not walked out, the formation of a party dictatorship over the soviets would have been much more difficult to achieve, since before their departure even a majority of the Bolshevik Party's Central Committee was for an all-socialist coalition government, not to mention the rank and file of the Party and the overwhelming majority of workers, soldiers and peasants. On the Social Revolutionary Party, see Oliver Radkey, *The Sickle Under the Hammer* (Columbia University Press, 1963) and *The Agrarian Foes of Bolshevism* (Columbia University Press, 1958). As Radkey, the major historian of the Constituent Assembly on whom Anweiler relies, himself concludes, the Constituent Assembly would have fallen under its own weight had it not been disbanded. For it to have succeeded, it would have had to meet before August 1917, and only the Social Revolutionaries are to blame for this. (*The Sickle Under the Hammer*, p. 456ff)

6. See, for example, Antonio Carlo, "Lenin on the Party," *Telos* no. 17 (Fall, 1973), 2-40. Carlo seems especially naive in locating the bureaucratic turn in 1919-20, and taking at face value Lenin's statements at the Second All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions in January, 1919 on the necessity for the trade unions democratic administration of society. The trade unions, aside from being bureaucratic and quite distant from the rank and file of workers, had already been used to discipline, integrate and radically delimit the factory committees which were one of the main supports for the revolution, and had accepted their subordination (at Lenin's wish) to state policies determined by the Council of Peoples' Commissars. The major formalization of this had occurred a year earlier at the First All-Russian Congress of Trade Unions. On these and related topics, see Maurice Brinton, *The Bolsheviks and Workers' Control* (London: Solidarity, 1970) and Frederick Kaplan, *Bolshevik Ideology and the Ethics of Soviet Labor* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1968).

7. Stephen Cohen, *Bukharin and the Bolshevik Revolution* (Vintage, 1975), 89ff.

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Anweiler adequately shows how Lenin had a difficult time seeing the soviets as other than organs controlled by the party. Unfortunately, his argument is marred because (1) he fails to discuss Leninist theory in a broad fashion and hence, instead of being able to appreciate the subtle theoretical transformations (or what French Marxists would call "*glissement idéologique*") which allow the semi-anarchist Lenin of *State and Revolution* to simultaneously stand for authoritarian party control over the soviets, he is forced to have recourse to explanation by opportunist motives; (2) he makes ridiculous demands which are inconsistent even with his own bourgeois democratic principles. For instance, Lenin is seen as authoritarian when, before October, he says he will refuse to abide by a majority Soviet resolution (even if the soviets assumed power) which would ban the Bolsheviks' peaceful propaganda among the people (p. 168). However, it is clear in Lenin's writings (not to mention Trotsky and Stalin) between the July Days and the gaining of a Bolshevik majority in the Soviets in September, and even until the actual seizure of power, that Lenin had little commitment to the soviet form as such and little concern with the democratic expression of the will of the masses through the Soviet delegates whom they quite freely elected and could (and did) recall at any time. The slogan "all power to the soviets," itself withdrawn by Lenin for a number of months prior to October, expressed less a principled commitment to popular forms of democracy than a tactic in the party's struggle for state power.

Anweiler's last chapter, entitled "The Establishment of Soviet Dictatorship," attempts to account for the evolution of soviet society over the three and one-half year period separating the revolution and its symbolic end in the armed suppression of the Kronstadt revolt. He points to the increasing centralization and bureaucratization of the soviet apparatus, but hardly accounts in a concrete way for the social, political, and economic bases for this. His most important concern is the gradual elimination of the socialist opposition parties from effective participation in the soviets. One learns almost nothing about the soviets as institutions in these years; Anweiler's history is true enough, but almost purely formal.[8] His concern for demonstrating broad continuities, between Lenin and Stalin, Kronstadt and Hungary, 1956, replaces historical analysis. Nothing Lenin says after 1917 is taken very seriously, none of the problems concretely analyzed, none of the options seriously evaluated. At one point, "*the cause* for the soviets' developing into purely decorative institutions" is seen as the Party's unwillingness to let the masses do things themselves (p. 243, my emphasis). While this Workers' Oppositionist critique has a good deal of truth in it, wrenched out of history it becomes merely a way of allowing Anweiler to end up on the side of the good guys—easy enough to do when one's analysis stands above the real action and the real options. An analysis of the implications of the Workers' Oppositionist critique and their proposals, of Lenin's response to them, and most importantly, of the real problems confronting an attempted transition to socialism in a predominantly peasant country where revolutionary socialist ideas, organizations or forms of production have almost no roots among the peasantry, would have been far more valuable than isolated quotations. The book ends on an especially mystifying note: "The Russian soviet

8. There is little published material available on this still. Anweiler, in his updated bibliography, refers to a number of more recent histories coming out of Russia, and a few German works which I have not been able to consult. The Ph.D. dissertation of Robert Abrams, "The Local Soviets of the RSFSR, 1918-21" (Columbia University, 1966) which begins to fill the gap in English, unfortunately remains unpublished.

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movement was both economic and political, the two facets being closely interwoven. Political freedom bordering on anarchy went hand in hand with economic equality. Self-government by elected factory committees and peasant cooperatives represented an economic democracy within a political framework of decentralized autonomous communes. These inherent tendencies of the Russian soviets were repressed and destroyed by the centralized planned Bolshevik state economy. Was this development inevitable at that stage of early industrial society in Russia, or were great future possibilities simply cut off? The Yugoslav attempt to build a 'socialist market economy' based on self-management in the factories, and similar efforts in Poland, may indicate that in Russia after 1917 a 'production democracy' was not necessarily doomed from the outset."

Perhaps. Unfortunately, an abstract appeal to Yugoslavia and Poland, which is little more than an appeal to the *idea* of self-management, cannot substitute for concrete analysis of Russia. The Bolshevik Party was not the historical demiurge Anweiler makes it out to be. This book's ultimate failure is that it has not provided the kind of analysis which would allow us to answer the fundamental question which he poses at the end, namely, what *was* possible?

*Carmen Sirianni*

H.S. Harris. *Hegel's Development: Toward the Sunlight*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972.

H.S. Harris offers us a 500 page inspection of a period of Hegel's life which Marcuse covers in 20 pages of *Reason and Revolution*. Harris' book ends when Hegel is thirty-two and has published only one work, a relatively insignificant translation with notes of J.J. Cart's *Confidential Letters*. Harris' account copiously details Hegel's early life and writings, at times, beyond this reader's endurance. Yet because of this microscopic intensity, the work may establish itself as the standard reference for Hegel's early writings. Harris seems to have this reference-character in mind when he gives us numerous charts and lists including: a chart comparing Rosenkranz' description of the Stuttgart manuscripts with those manuscripts discovered later by Thaulow and other evidence, a chronology of Hegel's earliest manuscripts (1785-88), a list of Hegel's philosophy studies at Tübingen, a chart of the theology courses offered at Tübingen from 1790-93 which notes those courses most likely attended by Hegel, a chart comparing Hegel's initial plan for an essay on the German constitution with the final state of the manuscript, and a comprehensive chronological index to Hegel's early writings as cited in the book. At the end of the text Harris adds his competent translations of five essays including the Tübingen Essay of 1793, *Religion ist eine*, and the "Earliest System-Programme of German Idealism."

Harris moves like a manuscript mole burrowing through the fine points of Hegel's many early writings and the existing scholarship surrounding them. Even his limited coverage of Hegel's personal life courts the obscure. Is he, for example, pulling our leg when he devotes several footnotes to identifying the young woman on whose feet Hegel apparently stepped at a Tübingen dance? But the brunt of his work is dating, placing and explicating the manuscripts. These limited objectives and Harris' precision in

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collecting the recently appreciated endowment of the young Hegel impress the reader more than any lofty efforts to rework the total Hegel puzzle. Harris restricts himself to an indigenous account of Hegel's early writings. Although he refers to the *Phenomenology,* there are virtually no references to the *Encyclopedia*, the *Logic*, the *Philosophy of Right*, or the *Philosophy of History*. Harris leaves his readers the task of tracing these master-works out of the earlier studies.

By pointing to the scholarly style and the modest aims I do not want to suggest that the book has no organizing theme. In an introductory (and concluding) essay entitled, "Prelude and Coda," Harris cautions us that the volume presents only half the story of the education of a philosopher which Harris hopes to complete in a future volume. Nevertheless, he construes this volume as a complete tale of Hegel's quest for a religious and aesthetic ideal, a quest whose failure directed him into theoretical philosophy.

Here we find a striking agreement between Harris and the apparently quite independent work of Gabriel Nauen, who writes in his Preface to his *Revolution, Idealism and Human Freedom* (1971), "The *terminus ad quem* of this study is therefore not Hegel's *Phenomenology* or Schelling's *System des transzendental Idealismus*, but Hegel's prior decision in 1800, while still under the influence of Hölderlin, to collaborate with Schelling by becoming a professional philosopher concerned with discovering a new metaphysics which would be the key for social transformation." Where Nauen stresses the political and moral spurs toward philosophy, Harris emphasizes the aesthetic and religious. Contemporary problems captivate Nauen's young Hegel, while ancient Greece inspires him throughout Harris' book. But this is a matter of emphasis and Harris' title, *Toward the Sunlight*, intends to evoke various sources: a) the actual sunlight of ancient Greece à la Hölderlin's *Hyperion*; b) the sunlight of Plato's ideal city and the sunlight outside the cave; c) the Enlightenment's light of reason; and d) the "inner light" of the Christian tradition. This "image-maker's" title resonates with Hegel's religious and aesthetic ideal. And the evident Platonic emphasis is borne throughout the book as Aristotle takes a rather distant second place.

Although both Harris and Nauen find the pattern of a broken ideal leading Hegel to philosophical reconciliation with his world, they interpret this decision differently. Harris reverses Marx's thesis to say of Hegel's transformation, "He stands on the brink of becoming a philosopher in the full sense, committed to understanding the world, rather than to changing it" (xxxii). Nauen counters this contemplative modalization of Hegel's philosophical reconciliation: "Hegel discovered in 1800 that historical society, philosophically understood, contained within itself the key for its own rebirth... Hegel, more modest and 'sensible' [than Hölderlin] decided, at all costs, to make his peace with reality and attempt to find within it the contradictions which if resolved would restructure reality in accord with reason."

The centerpiece of Harris' book is Hegel's Tübingen essay of 1793 which proposes three criteria for a folk-religion: 1) its teachings must be grounded on universal reason, 2) fancy, heart and sensibility must not be sent away empthy, and 3) it must be so constituted that all the needs of life—the public affairs of the State are tied in with it. This codification structures Harris' argument and his book. Folk-religion is the ideal which Harris sees Hegel pursuing, and if point 2) recalls the aesthetic character of that ideal, points 1) and 3) attest to the breadth of Hegel's concept of folk-religion and in particular its mediation by Enlightenment rationality and by recognizing the

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importance of political life. Hegel's romantic ideal is generous enough to embrace philosophy and politics at the same time that it subordinates them within an aesthetic religion.

Chapter I, *Stuttgart: 1779-1788*, and Chapter II, *Tübingen: 1788-1793,* culminate in the extended discussion of the Tübingen essay. Harris cites the burr-like problem of Socrates' cock as typical of the tension between Enlightenment rationality and the religion of the masses, a tension which Hegel believes resolvable in his most important Stuttgart essay, *Ueber die Religion der Greichen und Romer.* At Tübingen Hegel sharpens his criticism of the abstract character of Enlightenment rationality while admiring the organic totality represented by ancient Greece. At the end of his studies at Tübingen Hegel proposes an uneasy alliance of Enlightenment rationality (including Kantian morality) with the aesthetic naturalness of Greek folk-religion in the Tübingen essay.

The remaining three chapters of the book apparently take their titles from the three criteria for a folk-religion: Chapter III; *Berne 1793-1796: Reason and Freedom*, Chapter IV: *Frankfurt: 1797-1800: Phantasie und Herz*, and Chapter V: *Frankfurt-Jena: 1798-1802: The 'Way Back to Intervention in the Life of Men.'* Harris summarizes Hegel's Berne endeavors by reference to the canons for folk-religion, "Before he ever went to Berne Hegel had established the canons by which a 'folk-religion' was to be judged; he went to Berne with the problem of how the requisite organic unity of life was to be re-established in his own society; and after nearly a year spent in diagnosing the problem he finally focused it in the form 'How far is the Christian religion qualified[to serve as a folk-religion]?'. All of his subsequent labours in 1795 and early 1796 were directed towards answering this question" (233). In the course of struggling with this problem Hegel became increasingly estranged from Jesus as a *Volkserzeiher*, from the positivity and privateness of the Christian religion, and from Kant's morally-based theology. Parallel to this estrangement went an increasing admiration for Socrates and Plato and the public character of their *Volkserzeihung* which did not separate religion and the State.

In Berne, the problems of the relationship between Church and State and the status of the State itself trouble Hegel, since they undermined his coupling of Enlightened Christianity with ancient Greece. This indecision on the place of the State supports Harris' contention that Hegel authored the "Earliest System-Programme of German Idealism" (1796) attributed to Schelling and even to Hölderlin. Harris argues that if Hegel was torn between the Hellenic and Enlightenment notions of the State, he might have taken a strong stance against the State in the "System-Programme" while he demonstrates Hellenic sympathies for the State both before and after this essay was written.

Hegel turns to philosophy in Frankfurt when the attempted union of the Enlightenment and ancient Greece crumbles. Hegel's fundamental agreement with Plato and Kant deceived him into thinking that, "it would be a fairly simple matter to reintegrate the contemporary ideal of a rational harmony of life to which he was always drawn" (323). Hegel's problem is that the reflective understanding (*Verstand*) of Kant always leads to antinomies which fail to do justice to the unity of life. Or we could say that Descartes' ghost never stopped haunting the Enlightenment, for it could never reconcile spirit with objects.

Chapter IV catalogues the several ways in which Hegel keeps bumping into the same problem, leading him to recognize and thematize it. Hegel attacks the separation of

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divinity from humanity claiming, before Feuerbach, that positing an objective God vitiates our human autonomy. By identifying Abraham as the ancestor of the gap between spirit and nature Hegel sounds the basic theme of Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Faith plays an important role in Kant's philosophy due to the separation of theoretical and practical reason. And it is faith that Hegel criticizes in a brief and opaque fragment, *Glauben ist die Art* (one of Harris' five translations), to produce what could serve as a very rough draft of the Introduction to the *Phenomenology*.

The concept of law pervades Kant's philosophy. Hegel scrutinizes this concept in a remarkable text presenting the internal relationships among law, antinomy and the ought, " 'Since laws are unitings of opposed terms in a concept, which thus leaves the terms as opposites—and the concept itself exists in opposition to actuality, it follows that the concept expresses an *ought*' " (336). Out with the notion of *ought* go Kant's practical postulates, Providence and personal immortality, and the theory of retributive justice on which they are based. According to Hegel, it is the human fate to "make living beings into objects." This reconciling concept of fate sets Hegel off from the Cartesian theoretical tradition and brings him into sharp conflict with Kantian morality, which commands us never to treat humanity just as an object.

By attending to the place of faith, law, and retributive justice in Kant's philosophy Hegel moves Kant into the camp of positive religion, since both seal the separation between divinity (the infinite) and humanity (the finite. What is particularly interesting is Hegel's success in establishing a "rational mythology"—commonplace for contemporary secular humanisms—opposed to traditional Christian theology; e.g., personal holiness, radical evil in humanity, the forgiveness of sins, grace, Providence, Christ's divinity, personal immortality, and the compatibility of authority and love. Hegel's break with these doctrines comes from his Promethean, or Nimrodian, stripe of humanism. To set any barrier between God and man seems to fly in the face of human autonomy, the ardent theme of German Idealism and a theme underplayed by Harris. But Kant was a radical proponent of human autonomy, *and* held all the doctrines mentioned above. Thus, Harris' book may encourage re-examining the Kant-young Hegel relationship by way of plumbing the hidden heritage of contemporary secular humanisms. To work the Kant side of this relationship, it would be necessary to go beyond Harris' uneven presentation of Kant, particularly with respect to the *Critique of Judgment* and the essays on history.

Working with this assortment of ideas Hegel is actively fashioning his more adequate concepts of spirit, reason and dialectic. Harris finds the source of these watershed concepts of Hegel's mature philosophy "in the continuous evolution of his conceptions of 'life,' 'religion'; and particularly 'love' " (390). This reading raises objections against Marcuse's account of this development of Hegel's dialectic (cf. *Reason and Revolution*, pp. 36-37). Where Harris details both the importance of "life" and especially "love," in the person of Jesus, Marcuse only mentions "life" as the seed of the dialectic. This difference is highlighted by Marcuse's phrase, "The *Theologische Jugendschrifte* still *covered* the dialectic *over* with a theological framework" (p. 37, my emphasis). Harris' tracing the roots of the dialectic to the theology of God as spirit and love (well known in John's Gospel) makes Marcuse's language of theology "covering-over" the dialectic inappropriate. Harris also shows that Marcuse's immediate identification of "life" with "reason" is too facile, for at this stage in Hegel's thought he regards "life" and "live" as higher than "reason."

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Chapter V takes up the third criterion for a folk-religion, i.e., tying the public affairs of the State to religion. Lukacs' *The Young Hegel* served as an effective counterweight to the exclusively theological bent of Nohl's collection of some of Hegel's early manuscripts. Now Harris rebalances the interpretive scales in favor of the religious features of the early works by gathering Hegel's reading of Steuart's *Principles of Political Economy* and the problem of the relation between the living community and its material, economic and legal base under the rubrics of the transformation of a private religion into a public one.

The *leit-motif* of Hegel's suspension between the beautiful world of ancient Greece and the flat rationalism of Enlightened Christendom recurs here at the political level. Thus Harris rejects Lukacs' portrait of Hegel as the perfect bourgeois ideologue in favor of a Hegel attempting an amalgam of aristocratic and bourgeois politics. Harris notes a Platonic interest in the balancing of classes as he studies Hegel's political essays on Württemburg and the German constitution. Harris fails to find in Hegel's preference of *harmony* to *equality* his distinctive point that the *mediation* of the State through the involvement of groups embodying more or less general interests is vital to human freedom. He also misses an opportunity to cut another facet to Hegel's developing philosophical criticism of reflective understanding. For Hegel's attack on the machine-state of Prussia whose infinite wheelwork is put into motion from the top down like the formal syllogisms of reflective understanding and his identification of this political logic with the rise of the bourgeois class are of a piece with his philological attack on the dry abstractions of modern language, his distancing living *subjective* religion from the crusty dogmatics of *objective* religion, his disdain for the mechanistic physics of Newton to which he wants to give wings in the "System-Programme," and his gradual repudiation of Kant's morally-based theology and mechanistic conception of retributive justice.

This listing dramatizes the tellic drive toward theoretical philosophy active from Hegel's earliest studies. As Hegel wrote to Schelling, "In my scientific development, which began from the more subordinate needs of men, I was bound to be driven on to science, and the ideal of my youth had to be transformed at the same time into reflective form, into a system" (406). Hegel's separation of the "ideal of my youth" from his "system" confirms Harris', as well as Nauen's, strategy. But Hegel's use of the modality of necessity, "was bound to" and "had to be," makes us wary of rigidifying the pre-philosophy vs. philosophy periodization of Hegel's development encouraged by Harris' two-volume approach.

*Pat Murray*

Lucio Colletti. *Marxism and Hegel.* Translated by Lawrence Garner. New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1973. 283 pages. $15.75.

Which is worse, bourgeois romanticism or Marxist positivism? Assessing the work of Lucio Colletti demands an answer to this question. In this work, Colletti has attempted to Kantianize Marxist epistemology by vanishing every last remnant of Hegel's influence from dialectical theory. In the process, we get a revamped but not

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improved version of positivist epistemology with which we are supposedly to fight the allegedly proto-bourgeois critique of science from within Marxism. The ultimate *bête noire* is the post-Lukacs tradition of Hegelian-marxism which Colletti believes is tainted by spiritualist, metaphysical conceptions.

Colletti is important because he is one of the few positivists to have read and understood Hegel. Unlike many neo-Kantians, he has a firm grasp of Kant's critiques and their relation to critical social theory. Unhappily, Colletti employs Kant to combat the "spiritualist, romantic" critique of bourgeois natural science, a critique which Colletti feels is owed to Engels' transcription of Hegel's "annihilation of the world" into dialectical materialism. Colletti fights one of the most critical and important strains in modern Marxism by resisting the critique of science. His work provides a deep insight into the logic of positivism and unwittingly vindicates the Frankfurt critique of scientism.

A former student of Galvano Della Volpe, and now working in Rome, Colletti has been the subject of a particularly favorable introduction to Great Britain. New Left Books has translated a collection of essays, *From Rousseau to Lenin*, and now part of Colletti's major book on Hegel, *Marxism and Hegel*. Also, *New Left Review* has recently published a long interview with Colletti[1] which can be usefully read as a postscript to Colletti's book on Hegel. It also reveals Colletti's Kantianism in bald and explicit terms.

*Marxism and Hegel* is important in part because he explicitly charges the Frankfurt circle with a form of Hegelianism and romantic idealism which allegedly lead them to reject a materialist epistemology and thus to regress behind Marx's analysis of capitalism. In reading *Marxism and Hegel*, we can better understand the Frankfurt 'critique of science' not as bourgeois irrationalist hatred of objectivity *per se* (and of materialist cognition), as Colletti argues, but as a dimension of the revisionist *but not idealist* critique of ideology.

The book is full of misrepresentations and slurs such as Colletti's obtuse identification of Bergson, Heidegger, Lukacs, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Adorno all as "romantic," anti-objectivist enemies of materialist epistemology. This is comprehensible in light of Colletti's project: to purge Hegelian themes from Marxism. He wants to rid Marxism of elements and theorists who he feels have turned it into an abstract critique of science and technology, and a melancholic lament for times which have never been.

*Marxism and Hegel* is an epistemological rejection of Engels' putative "introduction" of Hegel's dialectics of matter' into Marxism. Colletti endeavours to "break" from Marx's first great interpretor and philologist. For him, Engels in *Dialectics of Nature* reintroduced Hegel's identity-principle and other metaphysical baggage into Marxism in the form of the 'dialectics of matter.' According to him, Hegel's critique of the understanding leads to the hypostatization of a concept of Reason (*Vernunft*) which "annihilates" all finite particulars through acts of total comprehension. He sees this as the substratum of the Hegelian-Marxian critique of science and technology. By combatting Engels' 'dialectics of matter' and his law of contradiction (derived from Hegel's *Science of Logic*), Colletti attempts to salvage the thesis of non-contradiction which is the fundamental axiom of positivism.

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1. Lucio Colletti, "A Political and Philosophical Interview," *New Left Review*, July-August 1974, no. 86.

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Superficially, *Marxism and Hegel* reads like a vendetta against Hegel's idealism. Yet Marx himself relegated Hegel to an ideological prehistory with the whole corpus of German ideology, and criticized his identity-principle of a reconciled subject-object as bourgeois ideology. What does Colletti hope to add? He wants to take Marxism back to Kantian epistemology based on the antinomy of pure and practical reason. He accepts the antinomy of science and philosophical critique, and hopes to combat Engels, Hegel, Hegelian-Marxism and their concept of *dialectic* with the principle of non-contradiction. Colletti challenges not Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and all the marvels of bourgeois natural science, but only the *Critique of Practical Reason* whose bourgeois morality Colletti as a Marxist obviously rejects. Yet, he wants to salvage the critique of pure reason as the categorial foundation for all Marxist cognition.

Kant is all-important because he aids Colletti in resisting Hegel's premature identity-theory of a reconciled, harmonized social order. He wants to introduce Kant's antinomies of freedom and necessity into Marxism, hoping to challenge Hegel's romantic spiritualism which has led to the allegedly neo-romantic, irrationalist critique of science and technology. Yet, Colletti takes Hegel's influence on Marxism to have been primarily the *Logic*, filtered through Engels' *Dialectics of Nature*, whereas Hegelian-Marxism since Lukács has rejected the later Hegel in favor of the phenomenologically reflexive *Phenomenology of Mind*. Thus, identity-theory is rejected by Lukács and the Frankfurt critics while Hegel's earlier dialectic is preserved. In other words, the directly *anti-Kantian* Hegel of the *Phenomenology* is employed by Hegelian-Marxism to dynamize Kant's static antinomies of pure and practical reason.

Colletti's recent interview in *New Left Review* indicates that his position now resembles neo-Kantianism in its conventional bourgeois form. He proposes a Kantian Marxism whose antinomy is science/revolution; he leaves open natural science for positivism, and restricts Marxian critique to the field of "practical reason." Yet, it is precisely this neo-Kantianism against which Hegelian-Marxism is directed. Hegel in the *Phenomenology* broke through Kant's static antinomies and implicitly rejected the absolute segregation of natural and social sciences. Hegelian-Marxism itself has been ambivalent about the Hegelian inheritance. Lukács' unfortunate concept of the proletariat as the subject-object identical of history only confused the Hegel-Marx relation. Ideally, Hegelian-Marxism only restates *Marx's own* supersession of Hegelian idealism; yet now, in a neo-Kantian milieu, Hegel's *Phenomenology* is being reread for its destruction of epistemological dualism.

Whereas Colletti aptly rejects all the metaphysical implications of Engels' 'dialectics of matter,' such as the "law" of contradiction, he confuses early Hegel, late Hegel and Engels' dialectics of nature. Furthermore, his failure to distinguish between epistemologically dialectical and absolutist-authoritarian Hegel is magnified in his rejection of the critique of bourgeois science. Somehow, Colletti sees the critique of science as belonging to *late* Hegel's identity-theory which "annihilates the world" and denigrates mere *Verstand* in favor of absolute *Vernunft*. As a Kantian, Colletti wants to see Marxist epistemology de-idealized in line ostensibly with the *Critique of Pure Reason*. But Marx's epistemology was founded not on the *Logic*, from which Lenin and Mao derived the metaphysical "law" of contradiction, but on Hegel's *Phenomenology*, at least up until the section of the "Absolute Idea."

By reducing Hegel's influence on Marxism to the pernicious metaphysical absolutism of the unity of infinity and finity, and thus—somehow—the critique of bourgeois science, Colletti misses the real materialist importance of the critique of

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scientism which belonged to cultural Marxism since Lukács' critique of reification. Part of the problem here is that the Hegelian-Marxists have not adequately theorized the critique of science *in terms of* a comprehensive theory of late capitalism. Habermas goes part way towards a comprehensive theory in his recent work on legitimation-crises, yet he is far less critical of bourgeois natural science than Marcuse or Adorno. Colletti, while unjustified in identitying Engels, late Hegel and the critique of science, at least recognizes the real problem of adequately combining the critique of bourgeois science with a critique of late capitalist economics. *Because* of his Kantian weaknesses, Colletti at least implicitly councils against the pre-scientific irrationalism which, in its critique of all objectivist cognition, would also usher in a politically quiescent identity-theory.

In the interview, Colletti evidences a self-critique directed at the crude positivism of his *Marxism and Hegel.* Yet, the positivism which he retains leaves untouched the categorial framework of bourgeois natural science which is rooted in dualism and antinomy. Having gone beyond *Marxism and Hegel* by his own admission, Colletti has now to think through a critique of science which is not romantic or idealist, and to reintegrate this critique into a comprehensive theory of late capitalism.

Instead of wanting to 'protect' Marx from Hegel by theorizing a *coupure épistémologique*, Colletti chooses to protect Marx from the post-Marxian tradition of "dialectical materialism," a tradition rightly seen as initiated by Engels. Colletti would treat sympathetically Marx's own disclaimer of Marxism; Marxism, or "dialectical materialism," is premissed on Hegel's annihilation of the world" (p. 191) an "annihilation" which has de-materialized Marx's epistemology and produced the aberrations of Marcuse and existentialist, humanist romanticism.

Colletti reads Engels as the first bowdlerizer of Marx's allegedly Kantian epistemology, an epistemology unviolated by Hegel's *Logic* and its absolutist (ie. non-phenomenological) equation of philosophy and science. Marx was a Kantian inasmuch as he rejected all identity-theory which prematurely equated concept and thing, subject and object. Colletti wants to salvage the antinomy of natural and social science, of science and morality in Kant's terms. He does not accept Hegel's phenomenological supersession of critical philosophy. He argues that Kant provided for developments in the "sciences of nature produced by bourgeois civilization since the Renaissance," and that these developments must not be challenged. As a neo-Kantian, Colletti *only* opposes "bourgeois discourses in the social sciences," arguing that the *Critique of Pure Reason* grounded the 'acceptable' scientistic principle of bourgeois natural science, whereas the inadmissible scientization of "bourgeois social science" springs from the *Critique of Practical Reason.*

"Against the charges...of spiritualist idealism [Colletti] would prefer to incur the opposite risks of neo-positivism."[2] In *Marxism and Hegel,* Colletti launched a broadside against every version of dialectical theory based on early Hegel's negative dialectic, from Lukács to Horkheimer and Marcuse. He argues that "materialism excludes the notion of a contradictory reality." Yet in a later essay, appropriately entitled "Marxism: Science or Revolution?", Colletti recognizes that by no means did Marx intend to produce societal laws of motion, but that Marx wanted to *criticize* the specious objectivity and permanence of capitalist motion. In admitting this, Colletti breaks both from the Della Volpean and Althusserian versions of Marxist scientism:

2. *Ibid.* p. 20.

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Marx's critique aimed to reveal the structural contradictions in such a way that these contradictions could be exploited and resolved practically: "Capitalism is a contradictory reality for Marx, not because being a reality it must therefore be contradictory—as dialectical materialism would have it, but because it is a capsized, inverted, upside-down reality. I am perfectly conscious that the notion of an upside-down reality appears to jar with the precepts of any science. Marx was convinced of the validity of this notion. I do not say that he was necessarily right. I can not yet state whether the idea of an inverted reality is compatible with a social science." (p. 19).

At least, Colletti supersedes the baldly scientistic claim that Marx produced objectively valid knowledge of societal laws in accepting the permanent diremption of theory and practice. Yet, he still cannot admit that Marx was not a "social scientist" but a revolutionary critic of the "upside-down" reality of capitalism. Marx criticized a contradictory reality in order to change it.

In *Marxism and Hegel,* he tries to attack the "critique of science" by combatting Engels' incorporation of Hegel's dialectical logic. Allegedly, Lukács, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Adorno rejected materialist epistemology in terms of which the concept cannot exhaust the thing. Probably, when he worte his book, Colletti had not read Horkheimer's essays on metaphysics from the 1930's or Adorno's *Negative Dialectics*. Had he done so, he would have found that the "Hegelian" critique of science was not Hegelian at all (did not accept Hegel's ultimate assimilation of science to philosophy) but only theorized and criticized the bourgeois social function of science as a form of advanced ideology, the myth-form of late capitalism. Marcuse's critique of one-dimensionality is not Hegelian, nor does it reject a materialist concept of critique; Marcuse only criticizes the ideological *occlusion* of reality which one-dimensional thought perpetuates. Colletti finally charges Marcuse with being party to Hegel's "annihilation of the world" (p. 79-80). Allegedly, Lukács and the original Frankfurt critics opposed *all* objectivity in spiritualist, irrationalist fashion, and thus the materialist epistemology which Colletti believes is owed to Kant, but which in fact is owed to Hegel's *Phenomenology.*

The critics of science from the Hegelian-Marxist tradition do no more than criticize the ideologically mystifying function of positivism on the level of cultural-critique. They never suggest that science and technology somehow create capitalism but only that science under positivist, undialectical auspices occludes the "upside-down" reality of capitalist society. Thus, the Frankfurt critique of science attacks not the epistemological presupposition that concepts cannot 'exhaust' the thing, but only the mystifying scientism which inheres in *Diamat* itself.

Colletti's *Marxism and Hegel* is thus useful in that it converges implicitly with the Frankfurt attack on Hegel's identity-theory. Hegel wanted to justify the "transubstantiation" of God in terms of the self-fulfilled, man-eating World Spirit which grew fat by annihilating the finite and merely temporal. The mistaken equation of late Hegel with critical theory falls when Hegel's "identitarianism," as Adorno called it, is brought to light in contraposition to Hegel's earlier *Phenomenology* and its vital negative dialectic. Colletti has carefully reconstructed the unfortunate Hegelian journey from particular experience in the *Phenomenology* to the infinite World Spirit which *sublates* the finite in annihilating the world, a reconstruction which is far more authoritative and convinding than Althusser's version of the "break."

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Colletti has slowly begun to move away from Marxology towards a type of Gramscian task-oriented theorizing. He promises a critical study of Gramsci once the definitive Italian edition of Gramsci's works is published. Thus, he says: "Marxism is in a crisis which imposes on us a profound self-examination and self-criticism;" or "The only way in which Marxism can be revived is if no more books like *Marxism and Hegel* are published..." Colletti is in the process of breaking away from arid Marxological scholarship; at least, he promises to do so. Suddenly, we have a Colletti who in the mid-70s is in the same place as Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse half a century before: on the brink of revisionism which will "study why history took a different course from that foreseen by *Capital,*" as Colletti says. Apparently, Gramsci will provide for Colletti one of the guide-posts on route from Marx to the mid-twentieth century.

Yet to deal adequately with Gramsci, Colletti would finally have to relinquish his analysis of the deep-seated metaphysical absolutism behind the critique of science. Gramsci himself was an Hegelian-Marxist who theorized a "new" science. If Colletti is to supersede Marxology through Gramsci he will need to take Gramsci seriously on the critique of bourgeois natural science and the historicity of cognition. A new Marxism can only be grounded in a non-positivist theory of cognition which breaks through Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* on the way to dynamizing the heretofore static antinomy of science and morality. The overcoming of capitalism will have to involve a revolution in the relation of the cognizing subject to the object, something which Marx first sketched in the Paris manuscripts. It is not enough that Colletti merely transcends Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* and its oppressive bourgeois morality. He must also transcend the entire concept of the absolute separation of pure from practical reason, of cognition from political economy. Marx would have said not only that the moral substance of Kant's practical critique must be destroyed, but that the very concepts of "pure" and "practical" reason must be exploded from within. The revolution will change our entire way of cognizing and touching the heretofore enchained object-world: *the liberation of nature* from contemplative bourgeois categories of possible knowledge.

Kant himself recognized the insuffieicncy of a theory of knowledge which was unable to penetrate the noumenon. He wrote the *Critique of Practical Reason* with the intention of breaking through phenomenalism to find the noumenon in moral practice itself. Marx did not accept Kant's bourgeois theory of moral autonomy. Marx had to rely on Hegel's own construction of a phenomenological history of spirit which *contained* the transcendent thing-in-itself. It is precisely this residue of Hegel's dialectical epistemology which critical theory retains. While Colletti is justified in denouncing the romantic irrationalism which equates objectification with alienation, he is not justified in returning to Kant's antinomy of pure and practical reason *which Hegel had already superseded* in the *Phenomenology*.

The confusion about Hegel arises because within Hegel himself there is both a phenomenological epistemology based on a negative dialectic *and* the reactionary philosophy of history rooted in the premature identity of the ideal and real. Hegelian-Marxism is faced with Hegel's spiritualist, conservative philosophy of history which taints and spoils the *Logic* as well as with his critical phenomenology which exploded Kant's dualism. The confusion of these two parts of Hegel leads intelligent Marxists like Colletti to reject the entire critique of bourgeois science as so much Hegelian back-sliding, when in fact the critique of science is essential for Marxism.

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Hegelian-Marxists like Lukács in *History and Class Consciousness* and Marcuse in *Reason and Revolution*, both of whom Colletti focuses on, contributed to this misapprehension of Hegel's dialectical epistemology by their temporary adoption of Hegelian categorial language mainly drawn from the *Science of Logic*. Adorno more cautiously *adopted only* the phrase "negative dialectic" from Hegelianism, and thus did not invite idealist misinterpretations. Yet, Adorno himself had to waste time and energy in attacking Hegel's identity-theory and reactionary philosophy of history from the perspective of the phenomenological Hegel, largely because Hegelian-Marxism had failed to distinguish clearly between the *two Hegels*.

In an age of science, it is tempting for radicals to fall back on Kant's safe dualism. Habermas has succumbed to this temptation. Yet it would be better if a critical Marxism could clarify its own Hegelianism so that dualism will not again raise its ugly head. Theory and practice will never be unified so long as theory is modelled on bourgeois antinomies designed to occlude the essential relation of cognition to politics.

New subject-object relations will underlie a "new science." The final overcoming of capitalism will usher in new cognitive forms of apprehending the world. Both phenomenology and critical theory envisage a new relation to nature and the body. Kantian dualism is in a sense an instance of "surplus repressed" human nature; the absolute distance between contemplative subject and object can be shortened if not wholly erased. Phenomenology avoids idealism by situating the cognitive subject in a world of flesh and things; Kant's "pure" reason is no longer pure.

Kant must be viewed as the most sophisticated Cartesian, the last elementally bourgeois epistemologist. Hegel in *Phenomenology of Mind* bequeathed to Marxism an epistemology which was dialectical and which exploded the transcendental purity of Kant's critique of reason. From existentialism to phenomenology to critical theory, transcendentalism has been attacked as a bourgeois mystification of the relation between cognition and politics. Marx said that to know the world is to have made the world. Once this is accepted as an epistemological beginning, Kant would appear in the history of bourgeois philosophy as the epistemologist who took dualism to its limit by breaking through the purely transcendental critique of reason into the realm of morality. The limits of positivism are the limits of capitalism. The liberation of man and nature must include the liberation of cognition from dualist fetters, fetters which are only kept in place and strengthened by the mimesis of Kantian antinomies.

*Ben Agger*

## Ronald Tiersky. *French Communism, 1920-1972*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974.

There are few topics as difficult to write well about, given the last fifty years of world history, than Third International Communism. For nearly two generations now, Third International communist parties have, on the one hand, been the repositories of the most intense hopes of progressives and, on the other hand, the objects of the most extreme fears of conservatives. Add to this the emotional atmosphere the events of Stalinism, the ebb and flow of world revolutionary trends, the ideological lunacy of the

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Cold War and, most recently, the development of strident divisions in the world Marxist movement, and the intellectual and interpretive problems facing any author trying to make sense of a Western communist party become truly formidable. Ronald Tiersky does a creditable job, against all these odds, in his *French Communism*. Indeed, despite several serious problem areas in his work, Tiersky's book provides us with perhaps the best all around source on the *Parti Communiste Français* (PCF) presently available in English.

Writing on French Communism has up until quite recently, fallen into four distinct schools—Trotskyite interpretations, Cold War tracts, "New Left" diatribes and, last but not least, the PCF's own versions of its experience. Trotskyite treatments invariably posit the PCF's attachment to Stalin's foreign policy as the cause of the PCF's failure to come to power in France (an understanding which is partially useful, given the PCF's near-perfect record of devotion to Soviet foreign policy, but which errs in overlooking the many domestic reasons for the PCF's lack of revolutionary success).[1] Cold War tracts, especially American ones, have traditionally taken the position that the PCF is a subversive "organizational weapon" at Moscow's beck and call which has been able to manipulate the support of large numbers of Frenchmen because a) the PCF has deceitfully posed as the heir to French revolutionary traditions and b) French workers have been too stupid to understand what it really was they were supporting and/or c) French workers are authoritarians anyway (theories which, besides their arrogant patronizing of the French people, consistently neglect to note that, throughout the Cold War, France was governed by a band of Centrist and Conservative politicians whose stupidity was monumental, and whose penchant for authoritarian solutions was equally marked).[2] "New Left" treatments of the PCF had a very brief history, flowering, as they did, mainly around May 1968. "New Left" understanding of the PCF was built around two propositions: First, the PCF had definitively sold out to the French establishment, was integrated in a non-conflictual way into French politics, and had ceased to be a revolutionary threat; secondly, the PCF was a bureaucratic monstrosity like all other establishment bureaucracies and therefore an enemy of the spontaneity and liberation which the oppression of modern consumer capitalism called for.[3] The problem with "New Left" critiques, in France as elsewhere, was not that their political arguments were necessarily wrong, but rather that they were rarely placed within a coherent, serious exposition which explained *why* they might be right—the New Left at its high point having developed a crippling weakness for arguments based on emotion and revealed truth. Finally, the PCF's self-understanding has had all of the expected weaknesses—the PCF has always been right, has always made the best of available circumstances and has always retained its revolutionary purity.[4] The PCF tends consistently to gild its own lilies, refuses to

1. The Trotskyite position on Third International parties can be found in a great many places, among others in Trotsky's own *The Third International After Lenin* and *Whither France?* Perhaps the most intelligent exposition of these themes to appear recently is Fernando Claudin's impressive *La Crise du mouvement communiste* (2 volumes, François Maspero, Paris, 1972) which places French events in a world context.

2. For good examples of the Cold War tract on the PCF see Charles Micaud, *Communism and the French Left* (New York, Praeger, 1963) and Gabriel Almond, *The Appeals of Communism* (Princeton University Press, 1954).

3. Here see Daniel Cohn-Bendit. One might also look at Richard Johnson.

4. See the PCF's official history, *L'Histoire du Parti Communiste (Manuel)* (PCF, Paris, 1964).

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question its own conduct in any but ritualized ways and, on occasion, lies. It is less a tribute to the PCF's presentation of self than to the dismal results of non- and anti-communist analysts that the PCF's own histories, on balance, usually make more sense than most of the rest of the work published on the same subject.

Tiersky's modest effort is free of many of the above defects. He doesn't "belong" to anyone and, as an American observer, he can afford distance from the decades of controversy surrounding the PCF. It is his position in history which helps him most, however.[5] In a world of peaceful coexistence and detente, in the aftermath of May 1968, it has become crystal clear that the PCF does not intend to "seize power" in France, at least in any Bolshevik manner. On the other hand, it is also clear the PCF has not abandoned its Leninist organizational practices and has never openly renounced revolutionary change as its ultimate goal. The facile conclusion that the PCF has gone the classic route of Second International social democracy in making its peace with capitalism cannot be accepted too quickly, then. Perhaps the PCF has not been "domesticated" at all. And, even if the PCF has been "domesticated," the processes of "domestication" which it has undergone must have been very different from those of the earlier Social Democrats.

It is to Tiersky's great credit that he does direct much of his attention to the "domestication" issue. His initial premise is an appropriate one, namely that the classic dilemma which has faced all oppositional Leninist parties has been that of living within capitalist societies over the long haul without being completely seduced into a conformity with its norms and procedures. He notes further that Leninism, aware of this dilemma, developed a whole series of institutions and procedures to ensure that the Leninist party and its rank-and-file could remain "exterior" to the enticements and rewards of liberal capitalism while being, at the same time, sufficiently "interior" to have some effect. Here he refers mainly to the vanguard party of professional revolutionaries, tied to an international movement for change, one of whose central objectives is to "counter-socialize" its rank-and-file and the masses to hold anti-capitalist and pro-communist values (which, in turn, will function to block whole-hearted cooperation with capitalist goals). His procedure, then, is to evaluate the PCF's experience to judge whether the PCF has, after decades of living within French capitalism, abandoned or greatly curtained its attempts to remain "exterior," in short, whether the PCF has become primarily "interior" to French capitalist life, whether it has become just another conventional French political actor. His conclusion, after some 400 dense pages, will not satisfy readers looking for an ultimate resolution of the issue of PCF "social democratization." He decides that the PCF remains in an ambiguous position in French politics, partly "exterior," partly "interior." Because the PCF remains partly "exterior" (i.e., it has not given up much of its Leninist uniqueness) "social democratization" cannot yet be said to have occurred.

Tiersky's methodological approach is to provide his readers with a long and detailed strategic history of the PCF (part I of the book) and then to present a series of

5. For additional good recent work on the PCF see Annie Kriegel, *French Communists, Portrait of a People* (University of Chicago Press, 1972) for a probing "anthropology" of French communist life (which Tiersky relies upon heavily as a source and model), unfortunately marred by a lack of historical perspective. See also D.L.M. Blackmer and S. Tarrow, eds., *Italian and French Communism* (Princeton University Press, 1975), for a collection of good new research on the PCF.

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analytical chapters based on this history (part II) in conclusion. It is the strategic history of Part I which is, by far, the most useful aspect of the book. In it, Tiersky shows the PCF since 1920 alternating between two very different modes of political action, strident radicalism, on the one hand (in which the PCF's "exteriority" seems dominant), and the assiduous pursuit of political alliances with non-communist forces, with the PCF behaving moderately ("interior" to legitimate French political life), on the other.

There have been three major periods of PCF "exterior" militancy since the party's founding in 1920: from the mid-1920s until the Popular Front of 1934, the years between the Nazi-Soviet pact of 1939 and the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, and the Cold War epoch, beginning in 1947 and stretching into the mid-1950s. In all three of these periods, the primary impetus for PCF action was "proletarian internationalism," the party's devotion to the foreign policy lines of the Comintern (dissolved in 1943) and the Cominform (founded in 1947). In all three of these periods the PCF was also isolated within French politics, for reasons having to do with the logic of class conflict in France. Simultaneously thrust outside the pale of legitimate action by purely French developments, and prompted by its position as an obedient section of the communist international to take foreign policy stands which deepened its domestic isolation, the PCF had to act "radically" (i.e., outside the existing consensus on allowable political activity) if it was to act at all. Not acting in such a context would have meant denying its basic principles. The facts of PCF behavior in these periods are indisputable. Where compromises minimizing the costs of isolation were possible, the PCF refused to make them, choosing instead to "go it alone." As Tiersky stresses, then, there have been clear periods in the PCF's history when the PCF has refused to pay the price of being a legitimate and accepted political actor in France, an important piece of data to present against the "domestication" thesis. Of course, the unwillingness of the Left party to sell its soul under extreme duress does not indicate that this party is revolutionary. Indeed, there is little in the PCF's actions in any of these major periods of isolated militancy which indicate revolutionary intentions. Rather, such actions, while "extremist" in the sense that they fell beyond the pale of legitimacy, were most often directed towards influencing the climate of political opinion in France towards political goals far short of revolution (usually towards the modification of French foreign policy). No matter, the very fact that the PCF has been historically capable of such periods of militancy does indicate that one should be skeptical of quick claims of "social democratization." As Tiersky points out, the costs of PCF behavior in these periods, in terms of its own membership, rank-and-file support, harassment and persecution to its leaders, have been very large. Such costs could have been avoided, and they would have been avoided by a completely "domesticated" party.

Perhaps more important, however, is that whenever the interests or indifference of the international communist movement has sanctioned it, and domestic political conditions have seemed promising, the PCF has chosen not to "go it alone." In the Popular Front period of the mid-1930s, in the Resistance and immediate post-World War II period, and in the 1960s and 70s (to the present) the PCF has pursued a policy of seeking political allies to its immediate right to form a "United Front." This insistent United Frontism demonstrates that the PCF has recognized for decades that it will not be able to come to power in France on its own. To achieve anything the PCF has needed allies, usually allies of the non-communist Left (Social Democrats) and Liberal Centrists (the Radical party). It is, of course, in the constant resort of the PCF

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to Popular Front-type alliance strategies that the important questions about "domestication" really arise. In order for the PCF to court allies standing politically to its right it has historically been obliged, first, to present itself moderately (in order not to offend or scare away potential allies) and then to seek agreement on issues and reforms which these potential allies will accept (i.e., to set immediate objectives falling far short of revolution).

It is one of Tiersky's main tasks to trace the development of the PCF's alliance policy from its *ad hoc* beginnings in the Popular Front to the present, when the policy has assumed the stature of a full-blown strategy for social change, at least in the PCF's mind. Tiersky sees the first two major PCF episodes of Popular Frontism—the Popular Front itself and the Resistance-post War period to 1947—as having been primarily determined by Soviet international objectives (in the mid-1930s the PCF sought allies in order to bring French diplomacy to side with the USSR against Hitler, in the Resistance-1947 period the PCF's goals were, first, to help win the war and secondly, to set up an independent post-war France capable of standing outside the American orbit). The PCF's general failures in both episodes need not be discussed. In both of these periods, however, the PCF had a subsidiary goal, to use its strength within United Front coalitions to enhance its own mass organizational and political base in France itself. And, even if these goals were less important than its foreign policy aims, here the PCF had greater success, in particular at building its now predominant position within the labor movement and its electoral power.

According to Tiersky, it is only within the Third Period of PCF United Frontism (the 60s and 70s) that the party elaborated United Frontism into a full-fledged strategy for change in France. De-Stalinization and peaceful coexistence in the international sphere (leading to increased willingness on the part of the Soviet Union to allow its international party allies greater domestic room for maneuver) made the PCF much freer to determine its domestic goals without constant reference to foreign policy issues while, at the same time, the foreign policy issues dividing the PCF from other French parties became much less controversial. At the very same time the consolidation of Gaullist rule in the Fifth Republic polarized French politics so as to force political groups of the non-communist Left and Center to take very seriously the possibility of alliance with the communists (squeezed between PCF electoral power on the Left and Gaullist strength on the Right and Right-Center, Social Democrats and Left liberals would have been condemned to complete impotence without agreements with the communists). In response to these new international and domestic openings, and in order to enhance its desirability as a United Front ally, the PCF proceeded to make several important doctrinal changes in the 1960s. First of all, it is publicly recognized that socialism in France would probably be reached through a "peaceful and French road," without either violent seizures of power Bolshevik-style or a Soviet-style dictatorship of the proletariat. On the latter point, the PCF also stressed that one-party proletarian dictatorship, when held to be a universal model for the transition to socialism, was an "abusive generalization from Soviet experience" (i.e., a Stalinist error when applied promiscuously to any and all societies). Next, the PCF granted the possibility that a transition to socialism and, perhaps socialism itself could, in France, be a "multi-party" affair, the work of an alliance of progressive forces, not that of the PCF alone. Finally, and most recently, the PCF has granted that in the unlikely event that a Popular Front government were ever voted out of power, the PCF would observe the rules of democratic "alternation of Power" and step down.

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If one reads between the lines of Tiersky's evidence it becomes clear that what the PCF has developed in the post-World War II period is a "two-stage" United Front strategy whose stated ultimate objective is revolutionary change. Stage one involves the construction of, and accession to power of, a United Front of the PCF and its allies of the non-communist Left and Center. In preparing stage one the PCF will deploy all of its mass organizational (particularly trade union) and political strength to lock potential political allies into a United Front cemented by a mutually agreed-upon Common Program (containing a series of structural reforms which the United Front will enact once it succeeds in winning electoral victory).[6] If, and when, electoral success brings the Front to power, the most complex part of stage one begins, the actual enactment of the Common Program. What removes the process of implementing such a program from simple reformism, is the PCF's intention to use the enactment of the Program not only to work the announced changes, but also to increase its own relative strength within the United Front and within French society as a whole. An example from the past will provide a good illustration of this. In the 1945-46 period, when the PCF was a coalition partner with other Resistance political forces, aspects of the program of the *Conseil National de la Resistance* were carried out, including several nationalizations. In the coal industry, one of the main targets of nationalization, the PCF sought to "stack" the direction and administration of the new Coal Corporation with PCF members and sympathizers, such that the PCF would thereby gain substantial control over the deployment of coal industry resources, which it then tried to use to advance PCF fortunes.[7]

The post-war Social Security legislations offer another example. Largely because of PCF pressure, the administration of the Social Security programs was delegated to committees elected by the workers themselves. Since, in practice, this meant that unions proposed candidates, and since the PCF by this point dominated the CGT, the dominant union organization, the PCF gained control over the Social Security apparatus and also acquired an important new channel of access (the Social Security elections) to put its messages before the workers. Ideally, then, United Front reforms, once enacted, will not be simple changes, but also new enclaves of PCF "dual power" within the broader society.

Stage two of the PCF's United Front strategic scenario would follow the successful completion of stage one. PCF success in stage one would lead, first of all, to great increases in political support for the progressive forces of the United Front coalition (because of the salient effects of increased democracy for masses of ordinary people) and, secondly, to relatively greater increases in the electoral and mass organizational strength of the PCF *within* this coalition. Because of such success, popular feeling in the country would favor even more thorough-going change, thus obliging the PCF's United Front allies to move further to the left. In such a situation the PCF would be

6. The present Common Program (concluded in 1972) provides a good example of what the PCF has in mind. It is designed to achieve "advanced democracy" in France through nationalizations and social welfare measures (economic democracy), political changes to lower existing institutional barriers to the direct legislative expression of the will of the people (political democracy) and some changes in foreign policy.

7. The administrative boards of the nationalized industries were tripartite, including representatives of government, consumers and workers in the industry, thus the PCF pushed its own men directly in as representatives of the government and consumers, while the communist controlled CGT coal workers union conveniently delegated PCF unionists to hold the workers' seats on the coal board.

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well-placed to push a reconstitution of the United Front coalition around the proposal of new and more radical changes. With this reformulation of the United Front on more radical ground, and with the PCF standing within it in a position of enhanced power, a "transition to socialism" might begin, when the PCF could finally reveal its revolutionary intentions. Revolutionary change would be the ultimate result.

All of this is important material, and Tiersky is of considerable help in putting it together (although his focus on the "exterior-interior" dichotomy rather than the "revolution-domestication" question hinders him in drawing some of his data to its logical conclusion). The book does have its problems, however. To begin with, it is marred by stylistic problems. Tiersky apparently has spent too much time in France where, as everyone knows, all thought must be divided into two parts. Tiersky's two part division, between an historical overview and an analytical section, is somewhat artificial and will cause the reader some difficulty. The analytical categories around which he organizes part II (the PCF as a shirting complex of four "roles," that of vanguard, "countercommunity," public tribune for the disadvantaged and aggrieved, and governing party) do not particularly help in understanding the PCF (excepting, perhaps, the notion of "countercommunity," a concept which Tiersky borrows completely from Annie Kriegel). Worse still, Tiersky reserves important pieces of historical data to use as illustrative material in part II when they would have been much more useful in their proper historical contexts in part I (in particular, some very interesting data about PCF uses of the union movement and municipal government). The resourceful reader will be able to put things back into their correct order, despite Tiersky's cartesian excesses.

There are other problems. For one thing, the reader should not expect to find new research in *French Communism*. Although the book is useful, it is essentially based on the research of others, intelligently reworked and arranged. There is no new material on the inner workings of the PCF, its decision-making processes, the whys and wherefores of specific choices, internal conflicts, etc. In addition, the book does make some errors, both of omission and commission. For example, there is much too little information in it about how the PCF has maintained and deployed its mass organizational strength historically, especially its trade union strength. Tiersky leans towards perceiving the PCF as a *political party* rather than as a Leninist political *formation* consisting of a directive political party surrounded by a network of strategically subordinate mass organizations, each with their specific role to play in a complex division of labor.

There are other points about which Tiersky's thoroughness and judgment may be questioned. The book has the required number of references to the PCF's "Stalinism." Yet Tiersky does not provide his readers with any exhaustive explanation of what he means when he uses this term. Piecing together his bits-and-snatches on Stalinism, the reader will conclude that Tiersky equates Stalinism mainly with two things, the PCF's exaggerated allegiance to Soviet foreign policy and its own "cult of personality" in favor of Maurice Thorez, its longtime leader. Almost by definition, then, the PCF "de-Stalinized" when it ceased its inordinate devotion to the Soviet Union's diplomatic strategies and when Thorez's presence was removed (he died in 1964). This is too convenient, however, it allows the PCF to get off the hook. Stalinism in the PCF and elsewhere meant, more than anything else, the organizational distortions to party life and behavior which followed from the elimination of the "democracy" from "democratic centralism." In this light there are serious questions about Stalinism to be

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asked even about the "modernized" PCF, questions which Tiersky does not care to raise.

Tiersky's history is not above reproach, either. He dates the PCF's transition from defensive, foreign policy oriented United Frontism to United Frontism as a coherent strategy for change in the 1960s. Other authorities place the shift much earlier, in the post World War II period, and there is much to be said for their arguments. For Fernando Claudin (in *La Crise du Mouvement Communiste*) the shift began in the Popular Front period and was completed after the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943. If we are to take Maurice Thorez's remarks to the *London Times* in November 1946 at face value (Tiersky reduces them to a very specific tactical maneuver), and PCF behavior at the time supports such an interpretation, the PCF was not only seeking to further the interests of Soviet diplomacy in the immediate post-war period, it was also quite seriously trying to open up the "peaceful, French road to Socialism" even then. Such an interpretation, that the PCF's strategy for change within France had, by 1944-47, moved away from Bolshevik putschism, towards peaceful alliance manipulating to work basic change, also would have the virtue of placing the PCF in line with the rest of the Communist Movement, then busily working towards the establishment of "Peoples' Democracies" (a strategic development to which Tiersky pays much too little attention). The distinction here being made is not simply arcane. Tiersky's argument leads the reader to see the PCF emerging out of the Stalinist wilderness in the freer 1960s to shift its position towards a more liberal and sensible way of operating within France. If this shift is located much earlier, in the 1940s, it loses much of its "liberalized" novelty, and the PCF emerges as much less change-oriented in the last decade or so. Tiersky presents the PCF's modern United Front strategy as a major part of the doctrinal evidence for "de-Stalinization" in the PCF. If the historical locus of the PCF's strategic shift is pushed back to the mid-1940s, to a point when the PCF's Stalinism cannot be in doubt, then the case for PCF "de-Stalinization" in response to new conditions in the last 15 years is considerably weakened. Indeed, the case is weakened so much that one becomes entitled to ask how much the PCF's present strategy for change actually differs from the United Frontism directed towards establishing popular democracies which prevailed in oppositional communist parties immediately after the Second World War. The answer would be, not much. Such a perspective and such an answer might provide Tiersky's readers some useful and sobering counterpoint to Tiersky's own optimism about the extent to which the modern PCF has really changed.

There are three further historical problems in Tiersky's text. In his last two historical chapters (on the Cold War and the Fifth Republic) Tiersky unfortunately shifts his emphasis from the PCF's own behavior to the broader political environment which the PCF faced. In his Cold War chapter Tiersky stresses a political setting in which the PCF was continually isolated, no matter what it chose to do. By doing this he virtually obscures the facts of the rather drastic tactical shift of the PCF in the mid-1950s away from strident Cold War militancy towards renewed United Frontist moderation, a shift which created the policies the PCF has pursued up to the present. Then, in his Fifth Republic chapter, Tiersky allows his deep interest in the transformation of the non-communist left to lead him to ignore many rather important details of the PCF's mass organizational behavior in the 60s and 70s. In this period, the PCF becomes almost exclusively electoralist while shifting the major burden of mass mobilization onto the CGT in what amounted to basic redivision of labor between

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party and trade union. Finally, and most seriously, Tiersky does a bad job with the events of May 1968. A reader not otherwise acquainted with what happened in this massive social upheaval would learn little from Tiersky about the dynamic of occurrences in May, what was at stake, what the PCF and CGT did.

As we noted earlier, Tiersky sets himself one central problem, that of deciding whether the PCF has been "domesticated." His answer is that, because of the PCF's continued devotion to Leninism, its assiduous perpetuation of a Marxist "counter-community," and, finally, because of its continuing doctrinal commitment to the ideal of revolution, French communism still remains both "interior" and "exterior" to legitimate French political life. The problem with this conclusion, for our purposes, is that it leaves aside the question of whether the PCF remains revolutionary or not. Let us try to address this question more specifically.

Clearly, given the PCF's United Front strategy, French communism is no longer an insurrectional threat. It will not take advantage of momentary social disequilibria to attempt a minority seizure of power (May 1968 demonstrated at least this much). Recent experiences in Portugal (and, to a lesser extent, in Chile) do demonstrate, however, the Third International-derived communist parties, committed, like the PCF, to United Frontism, can have a serious dedication to basic social change. Moreover, the PCF's continuing claim that it is using French politics to work change, rather than being used by the system to forestall change does deserve more than the out-of-hand rejection which it often gets these days. Because the PCF's United Front strategy does have revolution as its stated goal, it is impossible to state *categorically* that the PCF is no longer revolutionary. However, it is possible to discern in the logic of United Frontism in France a series of substantial barriers to revolutionary success.

If we take the PCF seriously, then we know that the moderation and political caution of recent PCF conduct is seen by the PCF not as an end in itself, but as instrumental in preparing the way for broader, more radical action later on. Moderation and caution are appropriate postures for stage one of the PCF's two-stage strategy, postures which the PCF believes will hasten the consolidation and political victory of a United Front. During stage one the PCF *must* behave respectably and with circumspection in order to overcome the reluctance of less radical political forces to ally with communists. Thus, historically during stage one the PCF has almost totally shelved any appeals to, and talk about, proletarian revolution. Instead, in its stage one tactics and propaganda it has consistently stressed what certain commentators have labelled "Jacobin" issues—peace, national independence, greater democracy. Revolutionary radicalism is held in reserve for stage two.

The first barrier which arises follows from the fact that the PCF's United Front strategic intentions are no secret. French politicians of the non-communist left and center have understood the PCF's goals for decades. One problem, then, is that potential allies of the PCF in a United Front know full well that the PCF *will need* allies in order to progress beyond point zero in its strategic scenario. This knowledge, of course, obviously leads non-communist politicians to a counter-strategy of offering the PCF no concessions, or as few concessions as possible, of giving the PCF as little of what it wants as is conceivable, while at the same time securing PCF collaboration. This tendency for non-communist forces either to refuse alliance with the PCF or, if alliance appears desirable, to ally at the lowest possible cost, is reinforced by another piece of common wisdom about PCF strategy. Everyone also knows that the PCF wants to use a United Front to deepen and increase its own strength, often at the expense of

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its allies (usually by attempting to organize this rank-and-file out from under its non-communist leadership and towards communist hegemony). The implications of all this are clear. The PCF is desperate for allies. Potential allies, knowing this, will hold out for alliance conditions which minimize PCF chances for success. Over time, the reluctance of non-communist groups to ally with the PCF is likely to increase PCF willingness to compromise on issues of basic importance. Likewise, the reluctance of potential allies is likely to lower political risk-taking capacities within the PCF, since taking radical risks may make alliances impossible.

As if these alliance-centered questions were not enough, stage one of the PCF's United Frontism raises further problems. One must always keep in mind that the oppositional Leninism of Western Europe has always been, in large part, about *political socialization*—the socialization by a vanguard party of a "counter-community" to positions which will prevent the rank-and-file from adopting the integrating values of the broader capitalist society. Now, as noted above, stage one of the PCF's United Frontism has usually stressed "Jacobin" rather than "revolutionary" values as the content of PCF socialization. Given the fact that the PCF has spent much of the post World War II period in attempts to implement stage one, this means that much of its modern program of socialization has been directed towards promoting "Jacobin" moderation and caution, rather than revolutionary radicalism, in its rank-and-file. This is not to suggest that the party has given up its intense and impressive efforts at transforming its own inner circle of *cadre* into totally dedicated professional revolutionaries. It is to say, however, that these core *cadre*, in their mass work, do not stress their radicalism. Thus, *de facto*, the PCF has tended over time to create a rank-and-file whose main concerns are not revolution, but the satisfaction of immediate material grievances, the achievement of "advanced democracy," national independence, the construction of a United Front, and so on. To the degree that the PCF's socialization work has been successful, a feedback effect has been created, one which also tends to limit the PCF's capacity and willingness to take risks. In any situation, particularly a crisis situation, the party must make some judgment about the mood of the rank-and-file, how far they might be willing to go. Invariably, in stage one, the party will have a rank-and-file whose moderation and caution (which the PCF helped create) may limit the PCF's ability to choose radical options. Calculation that the rank-and-file may not follow radical calls to action will almost inevitably lead the party itself to avoid such actions, even if the party would, in the abstract, prefer greater radicalism. The PCF's calculations and actions in the May 1968 events provide perhaps the best illustrations of this process, with the PCF judging in the heat of crisis that its working class following would only support struggle around material questions, whatever the gravity of the situation. To the extent that PCF judgment was correct in May, it was partly because the PCF and CGT had led workers over the years to conceive of labor market struggle only in terms of material demands.

Let us presume, for a moment, that the PCF, through good fortune and astuteness, is able to overcome the foregoing difficulties and a United Front government, endowed with a serious Common Program, comes to power (an event which is unlikely, but not inconceivable, in France). At this point the new government would begin to enact the measures in the Front's program. Here events would be certain to follow to present further pitfalls for the PCF's strategy. To block the Front's reforms, domestic capitalists would resort to their own emergency scenarios—panic outflows of capital, refusal to invest, a plummeting stock market, and so on, all of which, in the

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context of a reformist reallocation of social resources, would lead to inflation and unemployment. Such actions by domestic capitalists would be paralleled by the workings of the international capitalist system. International corporate and financial institutions, plus the most powerful capitalist nation states would move mountains to frustrate the implementation of reforms in France. Loans and credits would become unavailable, speculation against the *franc* and monetary crisis would occur, processes which would, in their turn, intensify internal French economic problems, adding to them an increasingly negative balance of trade and payments. And, as these abstract difficulties translated themselves into dire straits for ordinary Frenchmen, popular support for the United Front might become problematic. In such an atmosphere of political polarization, economic stringency and incipient chaos, the United Front government would be obliged to take very strong measures to see that its program was enacted (measures which might well include the repression of certain anti-change forces). Also, because of the shifting political atmosphere in the country and the continuing suspicion by the PCF's United Front allies of communist intentions, the United Front's unity would itself become tenuous at the same time. In this situation the PCF would be caught in a double bind. In order to promote the measures needed to continue implementing the United Front's program (the *only* way to socialism for the PCF) the party might well have to risk alienating its coalition allies. If it decided to preserve harmony in the alliance rather than taking necessary measures to prevent sabotage of the Front's program, the party might well let pass the critical moment at which a breakthrough to real change was possible. In short, the inevitable consequences of world and domestic opposition to serious change in France would force the PCF either to take great risks (including, conceivably, a PCF "seizure of power") or to forego success. In such a situation it would be infinitely safer for the PCF to behave moderately. But in behaving moderately the PCF would pass up, perhaps for a long time to come, any possibilities for socialism in France.

Political life in France being what it is, we cannot give any definitive response to our question about the PCF's "deradicalization." But we can say that the PCF's option for a United Front strategy does throw up a series of barriers to PCF revolutionary success. Much in the United Front strategy places a premium on moderation and low risk-taking behavior on the part of the PCF. If there is anything at all to be learned from the study of modern revolutions, it is that they can be made only by political actors who are able to take great risks. It is quite unlikely that the PCF will ever be such an actor.

*George Ross*

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# SHORT JOURNAL REVIEWS:*

## ARENA, No. 37 (1975)

Box 36, P.O., Greensborough, 3088, Australia. GEOFF SHARP, *"Editorial—Conquest of Culture."* A partial integration of contradictions at the international level proceeds via capital exports from OPEC countries to the OECD states. A historical transformation of the character of advanced capitalist at the national level is underway, consisting of a movement from the indirect control of man through his labor to the direct control of his existence through the management of his attachment to unquestioned cultural values. Nowadays commodity fetishism is the center of value integration. In Australia and elsewhere there have been two developmental phases of this process since the war. The first centered upon programs of enhanced growth and consumerism; following the eruption of protest movements, the means of domination have broadened to include "welfare servicing of cultural values," whereby the whole of the life process begins to pass into the sphere of administration and cultural management. The project of *Arena*, therefore, is the development of a Marxist theory of this cultural hegemony and the construction of a liberatory culture. PETER CORRIS, *"Black Boxers"* and *"Anarchists Organize."* A.C. WILSON, *"Mandel's Tour."* Ernest Mandel's late 1974 tour is surveyed and his view that the USSR is a society "in transition" between capitalism and socialism is criticized. ROBIN McCORMACK, *"Consequentialism: The Means of an Ending."* Consequentialism means that the only considerations in the evaluation of actions is the exhaustive prediction of those actions' consequences in terms of harm or suffering. Such an ethic had a special affinity with centralized decision making and post-Enlightenment reformism. Until recently it existed as a critical weapon of reforming a non-consequential culture. But now it extends its hegemony over the whole cultural life (in Marx's terms, the realm of freedom is being collapsed into the realm of necessity). Consequentialism now invades and represses those very remaining nooks and crannies of our private lives. DOUG WHITE, *"Aboriginal Education."* In recent times the physical destruction of Aboriginal societies has been replaced by various policies of assimilation, varying from the forcible to the persuasive, from coercion to paternalist welfare. Schooling is now crucial in this process. While presented as a set of particular syllabuses and things to do, it is actually a projection of a style of thought and language and a mode of social relations. Concretely: schooling is the super-imposition of cosmopolitan modes of thought and interaction upon the extended forms of kinship interaction. Schooling thus becomes a destructive process. IAN HUNTER, *"Language and Reality."* This is a brief introduction to the problem of the nature of scientific realism (Hume, Freud, J.J.C. Smart) and English literary criticism (e.g., the anti-utilitarianism of Arnold and T.S. Eliot) as cultural forces structuring and preserving experience itself. HUMPHREY McQUEEN, *"Reply to Bob Watts."* More debate in reply to Watts' "New Directions for Australian History" (*Arena* no. 34). ANDREW GILES-PETERS, *"The Problem of Scientific Marxism."* The proposition that Marxism is a positive social physics which generates scientific "laws" is paradoxical in that it is not simultaneously its own metatheory. Via a consideration of the writings of Korsch this paradox is discussed and criticized at length. The author argues that Marxist science is important to the revolutionary movement, not because it provides such scientific laws which can then be "applied," but because it offers a theoretical framework within which the actions of individuals, groups and classes receive a general significance. Thus, for those sharing its general goals it provides a coordinating framework for activity, and can therefore function as a partial cause of the fulfillment of its own conditional predictions.

## AUT AUT, Nos. 145-146

Via Curti 8, 20136 Milan, Italy. $3.00 per issue. MASSIMO CACCIARI, *"Lavoro, Valorizzazione, 'Cervello Sociale'."* An attempt to evaluate the social function of "Research and Development." Beginning with Marx's analysis, Cacciari examines the present crisis situation and concludes that the present systems is not reducible to classical models because of the new means of crisis-management. GAJO PETROVIC, *"Socialismo Burocratico?"* Since "bureaucracy" and

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* This section was prepared by the Toronto *Telos* Group composed of Ilene Crawford, John Fekete, John Keane, Steve Levine, Folke Lindahl, Janet Lum, Ray Morrow, Peter Murphy, Patrick Patterson, Paul Piccone, Greg Renault, Brian Singer, Wodek Szemberg, Nick Xenos, with the assistance of John Ainlay, John Alt, Roberta Arnold, Humphrey Glass, and Patricia Tummons.

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"socialism" are two contradictory notions, Petrovic seeks to figure out how socialism could have become bureaucratized. Pointing out that in Lenin there is "no radical analysis of the possibility of a really socialist organization of production," he notes that self-management as envisioned by Yugoslavia offers the only hope for avoiding bureaucratization. GUIDO NERI, *"Variazioni Ideologiche del Socialismo Realizzato: L'"Umanisimo' scientifico-tecnologico."* An excellent analysis of the ideological impact of the technological and scientific revolutions in Russia, East Germany and Czechoslovakia. Neri shows how, after 1968, a new wave of repression in the intellectual spheres has resulted in the purge of the best minds of Eastern Europe. Special attention is paid to Richta's report and its reception. MIHALY VAJDA, *"Il Funzionario dell'Umanità."* A discussion of the Husserlian notion of philosophy in contradistinction to common sense. Philosophy is invariably committed and in the present period is seen as having to articulate the theme of 'new needs' with the goal of realizing philosophy in a new cultural context. GIANGIORGIO PASQUALOTTO, *"Cultura come Industria."* A detailed discussion of culture under capitalism, with special emphasis on the Tronti and Asor Rosa analyses. AMEDEO VICORELLI, *"Continuità e Rottura in Marx: su Alcune Interpretazioni Recenti dei 'Grundrisse'."* An analysis of recent interpretations of Marx's *Grundrisse*. MARIACHIARA FUGAZZI, *"Su 'Dialettica e Materialismo' di Cesare Luporini."* A critical review of Luporini's latest book. CARLO SIMONI, *"Sartre, l'Intellettuale, l'Organizzazione."* A discussion of Sartre's notion of intellectuals. BRUNO ACCARINO, *"Note su Antagonismo e Produzione in Krahl."* A critical evaluation of Krahl's work as a *theoretical* contribution. GIANPIERO COMOLLI, *"Le Voci della Dissidenza e l'Ascolto Psicanalitico."* A review-article of Fachinelli's work. ANDREA SABBADINI, *"Un Caso Singolare di Psichiatria Criminale."* A study of one of the earliest applications of psychiatry to criminal cases.

## BULLETIN OF THE CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMICS (Feb. 1975)

c/o Ben Fine, Department of Economics, Birbeck College, 7-15 Gresse Street, London W1P 1PA. MAKOTO ITOH, *"The Formation of Marx's Theory of Crisis."* Marx's crisis theory actually contains two not entirely consistent theories: 1) the excess commodity theory that conceptualizes crisis as originating in the overproduction of commodities due to either the disproportion among production branches or the restricted consumption of the masses; 2) the excess capital theory that perceives the excess of commodities as being the result of an over-accumulation of capital. This essay attempts to discern which thesis is the fundamental cause of economic crisis. The excess commodity theory leaves unexplained why over-production sufficient enough to cause a crisis should occur and why it must be of a cyclical nature. Moreover it fails to locate the difficulties of capital reproduction in the sphere of production. According to the author the excess capital theory should provide an answer, but it is hardly developed. This is because Marx lacked a fully elaborated theoretical treatment of the workings of the credit system and a correct theory of a capitalist law of population, although the foundations for such a theory are present in *Capital*. MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *"An Analysis of South African Capitalism—Neo-Ricardianism or Marxism?"* This essay attacks Harold Wolpe's thesis that the internal colonial aspect of the South African social formation arises from the restructuring and conservation of the precapitalist sector upon which the dominant capitalist mode feeds. The basis for the critique lies in Wolpe's Ricardian overtones; that, a decline in the productive capacity of the precapitalist sector would force higher wages and threaten to reduce the rate of surplus value thereby precipitating a fall in the level of profits. Williams argues that the immanent laws of capitalist production, i.e., the tendency for the rate of profit to fall as the organic composition of capital rises, should have been the basis for the analysis. Via this return to orthodoxy the author manages to short-circuit the whole problem of the qualitative differences between developed and underdeveloped economies. ANDREW GLYN, *"Notes on the Profit Squeeze."* In *British Capitalism, Workers and the Profit Squeeze* (Penguin, 1972), Glyn and Sutcliffe attempted to statistically demonstrate the declining rate of profit among British firms during the last two decades. In this article Glyn not only replies to his critics and updates his analysis, but also provides a long discussion wherein he attempts to refine his original methodology. Strictly for the specialist. IAN GOUGH and JOHN HARRISON, *"Unproductive Labour and Housework Again."* An attack on Paul Bullock's definition of productive labor—that only labor employed by capital to produce the material elements of constant and variable capital is productive. Labor producing luxuries, even though employed by capital, is therefore unproductive. The authors contend that production and circulation workers dealing with wage goods, constant capital and luxury goods in the capitalist and other modes of production (e.g., housework) all produce "relative" and-or "absolute"

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increases in surplus value. JOHN HARRISON and BOB SUTCLIFFE, *"Autopsy on British Leyland."* An account of BLMC management's futile attempts to make British Leyland into a profitable company.

## LA CRITICA SOCIOLOGICA, No. 32 (Winter 1974-75)

Via Appennini, 42, 00198 Rome, Italy. Subscription: $15.00 annually. FRANCO FERRAROTTI, *"Le Responsibilità della Cultura Italiana."* A critical evaluation of Italian culture. GUIDO BOLAFFI, ADRIANO VAROTTI, *"La Struttura Capitalistica dell'Agricoltura Italiana e il Problema dei Contadini."* A penetrating analysis of the structure of Italian agriculture. PAOLO CALZABINI, *"Il Dibattito sul Mercato del Lavoro."* A significant contribution to the present debate concerning developments in the labor market. LUIGI BERZANO, *"Ideologia e Utopia nelle Diocesi di Roma."* An analysis of recent developments within the radical religious community in Rome. ROBERTO CIPRIANI, *"Strutturalismo e Religione."* A very schematic and superficial structuralist approach to the analysis of religion. FRANCO FERRAROTTI, *"Note Preliminari sulla Ripresa Sociologica nell'Unione Sovietica."* An excellent evaluation of the development of sociology in the USSR. It is a follow-up of Ferrarotti's brilliant earlier analysis of Russian sociology. SANDRA PUCCINI, *"Oscar Lewis e il Concetto di 'Cultura delle Povertà'."* A positive evaluation of Lewis' contribution to anthropology. SIMONETTA LUX, *"Appunti Biografici sulla Sociologia dell'Arte [Part III]."* The last part of a long piece on the sociology of art.

## CRITIQUE, No. 4 (Spring 1975)

31 Clevedon Rd., Glasgow G12 OPH, Scotland. $1.75 per issue. In this most recent issue, *Critique* again demonstrates itself to be more interesting as a journal of "Soviet Studies" than of "Socialist Theory." M. HOLUBENKO, *"The Soviet Working Class: Discontent and Opposition."* This article surveys recent developments in the Soviet Union pertaining to the intensification of class conflict between the working class and the bureaucracy. On the one hand, the author discusses the creation and elaboration of the regime's administrative-repressive apparatus of social control and its response to growing discontent among Soviet workers. On the other hand, he attempts to chronicle and explain various recent manifestations of working class opposition ranging from principally individualized acts of despair to the more exceptional but increasingly frequent forms of organized protest. Finally, Holubenko attempts briefly to indicate the probable direction of future Soviet class struggle. G.A.E. SMITH, *"The Political Economy of the Reform Movement."* This second largely descriptive piece is primarily concerned with the contradictions inherent in a bureaucratically administered (as opposed to democratically planned) Soviet economy. After sketching the historical background, the author considers the specific instance of relatively fundamental, albeit unsuccessful, agricultural and industrial reforms undertaken by the Soviet bureaucracy in 1965 in an attempt to solve the persistent problem of a slow-moving process of accumulation. Smith convincingly shows how the threat of working class action, the existing industrial structure which resulted from Stalin's strategy for industrialization, and the resistance of the bureaucracy itself have all severely limited the range of reform options available as well as undermined the success of the courses of action adopted by the Soviet leadership. The author concludes by arguing that the present Soviet policy of detente with the West—also designed to help solve the accumulation problem—will ultimately fail for the same reasons. J.-L. DALLEMAGNE, *"Justice for Bukharin."* Taking as its point of departure Lenin's "Testament" criticisms of Bukharin's scholasticism and his failure to master the dialectic, this essay attempts to substantiate these allegations through a tedious examination of Bukharin's positions on various practical questions of Soviet policy from 1918-1928. In general it is argued that Bukharin had an a priori approach to the development of socialism to the extent that he considered the proletarian character of the Soviet state and its state apparatus established once and for all by the seizure of power, irrespective of the specific measures taken. In other words, he mechanically equated the dictatorship of the proletariat with socialism. What Bukharin failed to understand, according to the author, was that the workers' state is nothing but an abstraction unless it viewed concretely in terms of the objectives and policies of the state apparatus (e.g., the "criminal illusion" of socialism in one country). Throughout all of this, Dallemagne continues to grind his Trotskyist ax in preparation for the conclusion of his article where he promises that Stalinism will not go unpunished for having usurped the right to condemn and execute Bukharin. DAVID-HILLEL RUBEN, *"Materialism and Professor Colletti."* This article is yet another tiresome addition to the apparently never-ending debate over the nature of a genuinely Marxist

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epistemology. Postulating a materialist ontological foundation of Marxism (meaning, as Lenin succinctly put it, that "the object exists independently of the subject and is reflected more or less adequately in the subject's mind..."), Ruben argues that many recent so-called Marxist epistemological refinements, such as that found in the work of Lucio Colletti, are, in fact, incompatible with Marxism insofar as they attempt to graft an idealist theory of knowledge onto the materialist ontology. As against this, Ruben advocates a simplistic and not at all original materialist epistemology which would "correct" for the knowing subject by subtracting the effects of mind, thereby leaving only the immediate and pure datum of the objective world.

## ECONOMY AND SOCIETY, Vol. 4, No. 2 (May 1975)

Broadway House, Readin Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1EN, England. BARBARA BRADBY, *"The Destruction of Natural Economy."* The necessities of the expanded reproduction of capitalism result in the articulation of the capitalist mode of production with "pre-capitalist" modes. The nature of this articulation and its consequences for the "pre-capitalist" mode of production is a function, first and predominantly, of the needs of the capitalist mode and second of the internal structure of the "pre-capitalist" mode. This proposition is demonstrated through an examination and critique of Rosa Luxemburg and Pierre-Phillipe Rey and is illustrated by two contrasting examples of the articulation of capitalism with two different "pre-capitalist" modes of production in Peru. DAVID P. and LYNN S. LEVINE, *"Social Theory and Social Action."* Modern social thought identifies social science with the conception of (1) "social action" and (2) the "rationality" of social action. This identification is central to the specificity of modern social thought as opposed in particular, to Marxian social theory. A critical appraisal of these fundamental categories of current social science is developed and an attempt is made to trace out the contradictions which they entail for the theoretical comprehension of social phenomena. The contradictions intrinsic to the social action methodology, once made explicit, provide the necessary starting point for the critique of modern sociology and economics. D. SASSOON, *"An Introduction to Luporini."* CESARE LUPORINI, *"Reality and Historicity: Economy and Dialectics in Marxism: Part 1."* This is a "theoretical discussion of the limitations of historicism. This essay examines the problem of the different possible modes through which the capitalist system can continually constitute itself. Also considered is the problem presented by Engels' proposed alternative between "historical method" and "logical method," the problem of the Leninist criterion of objectivity and the problem of the functional relationship between the individual and the socio-economic formation. CORRESPONDENCE. An exchange on the resignation of Hindess and Hirst from the *Economy and Society* editorial board.

## FEMINIST STUDIES, Vol. 2, Nos. 2-3 (1975)

415 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025. ELAINE SHOWALTER: *"Dinah Mulock Craik and the Tactics of Sentiment: A Case Study in Victorian Female Authorship."* Taking Dinah Murlock Craik as a case in point, Showalter reveals critical elements in works that otherwise respect the social norms and the position of women in the Victorian era. While lamenting the hardships of life for the unmarried woman, Craik shows her readers a possible route to independence. Showalter reminds us that authors must be analyzed within both the framework of their own experience and the limits of their psychological and political vocabularies. NANCY SCHROM DYE: *"Creating a Feminist Alliance: Sisterhood and Class Conflict in the New York Women's Trade Union League 1903-1914."* Dye analyzes the cross-class composition of the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) and sources of class conflict within the union. Although diverse class membership was in part responsible for disputes within the WTUL, the key factor in the policy fights was differences between those primarily concerned with the women's movement and those who viewed the labor movement as of paramount importance. Dye explores the experience of women in the WTUL that produced both deep cross-class relationships and conflict. ANGUS McCLAREN, *"Doctor in the House: Medicine and Private Morality in France, 1800-1850."* McLaren argues that the doctor won the respect and confidence of bourgeois society in early 19th-century France by "scientifically" substantiating myths of female inferiority. The doctor had not only a medical task but an ideological one: perpetuation of male control of the female, the crippling of female sexuality and construction of a view of woman as a congenitally weak and defective. The 19th-century French doctor sold himself as medical expert and moral guide. KATHERINE ELLIS, *"Paradise Lost: the Limits of Domesticity in the 19th-century Novel."* The industrial revolution transformed the family from productive unit to a refuge from

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the world of work. The idea of family as refuge conceals destructive aspects of domesticity (Dickens' *Great Expectations*) and encourages the split of persons between work-world and home (Shelley's *Frankenstein*). JUDITH STACEY, *"When Patriarchy Kowtows: the Significance of the Chinese Family Revolution for Feminist Theory."* Positive lessons of the Chinese revolution are that socialism and structural reforms are key to female emancipation. Women progress most during periods of militant political activity. Negative lessons are that women must make their own revolution, sexism is deeply ingrained in the human psyche, female work must incorporate men and physical endurance must be undermined by technology as a key factor in labor before men and women can gain equal work status. KIRK JEFFREY, *"Marriage, Career, and Feminine Ideology in 19th-Century America: Reconstructing the Marital Experience of Lydia Maria Child, 1828-1874."* Lydia Maria Child, author and abolitionist, expresses in her marriage as well as career the "feminine ideology." Developed during the 1830s and 1840s, the feminine ideology exalted women as society's moral force. Their function in tempering negative effects of American progress and male predatory sexuality necessitated an expansion of role to include teaching and writing. Thus, Child's career and marriage expressed a single principle. Her social criticism never led to a critique of the family. CHRISTINE GARSIDE ALLEN, *"Plato on Women."* Plato's view of the inferiority of women in the cycle of reincarnation apparently contradicts his ideas of sexual equality in the *Republic* and the *Laws*. These are reconciled, however, in his underlying view of the nature of human beings: the nature of the soul is independent of attributes of the body. SUSAN GRATHWOHL, *"Poems."* JOHNNY FARAGHER and CHRISTINE STANSELL, *"Women and their Families on the Overland Trail to California and Oregon, 1842-1867."* The experience of westward migration broke down the female subculture that developed in Jacksonian America. Women, in many cases, were forced by exigencies of the journey to do men's work. The new work role, however, clashed with both the old consciousness and the continued insubordination. Thus, integration with the man's world did not bring about an expansion of sense of self and role. Women reacted by attempting to preserve their domestic sphere in transit. SHERRY B. ORTNER, *"Oedipal Father, Mother's Brother and the Penis: A Review of Juliet Mitchell's* Psychoanalysis and Feminism*."* It is neither possible nor desirable to destroy the Oedipal complex, as Mitchell argues. By changing the content of the Oedipal experience, which Ortner sees in revisionist Freudian terms as caused by social relations, male-female differences can be eliminated. This means that structural rearrangements of the nuclear family to allow children to be raised by both men and women are needed. K. KELLY WEISBERG, *" 'Under Greet Temptations Heer.' Women and Divorce in Puritan Massachusetts."* The exceedingly liberal divorce law, for its time, that developed in 17th-century Massachusetts must be analyzed in conjunction with social conditions of the time. Puritan reliance on "family government" for social control, scarcity of women, desire to protect deserted women's inherently weak nature from temptations of flesh, and a general aim of upholding the family and alleviating burdens on the state contributed to a liberal divorce policy. BETH NIEMI and CYNTHIA LLOYD, *"Sex Differentials in Earnings and Unemployment Rates."*

## INSURGENT SOCIOLOGIST, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Winter 1975)

Dept. of Sociology, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. $2.00 per issue. FRED BLOCK, *"Contradictions of Capitalism as a World System."* Many of the problems of the world economy—particularly global inflation—are rooted in the high level of openness that has been institutionalized in the post-war international monetary system. In the past this level of openness in the world economy was sustained only because the US had the economic and political power to assure a general acceptance of a code of international economic behavior and could provide adequate quantities of international credit and liquidities. But a declining economic position has forced the US to relinquish its "coordinating role." In the absence of another country with enough power, Block proposes that economic coordination can only be effected by the "supra-national" or the "joint management" solutions. However, the obstacles to such coordination are enormous because the US will be reluctant to sacrifice its imperialist interests for the sake of international economic order. America will resist being the victim of a system embedded with inequalities that systematically obscures differential benefits for different countries and different classes. The probable direction of the world economy is towards increased regional organization and a further breakdown of the international monetary system. SIDNEY PECK, *"Current Trends in the American Labor Movement."* Since Hiroshima and Nagasaki which heralded the US' global right to the American century, the militancy of the rank and file was transformed into docile trade unionism, following a cold war line. Truman's "fair deal" gave moderate wage hikes

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and increased social welfare benefits, and received in return, labor's support for neo-imperialism and anti-communism—to decimate left and "communist" elements abroad and at home. However, the complacency was shortlived. The increasing participation in the labor force of women, blacks and students infused with the radical mood of the 1960s is generating a new consciousness that is articulated in the recent labor unrest. A cliché. JUERGEN HABERMAS, *"The Place of Philosophy in Marxism."* A paper presented at Korcula summer school, continuing a problematic that has preoccupied Habermas: the search for emancipatory elements in the relation between productive forces and productive relations, and in this case the specific role of philosophy. If philosophy has been the pretext for a revolutionary praxis—a praxis guided by the rational essence of philosophical thought at the same time that it is in turn destroying the philosophical mode as a form of consciousness, Habermas argues that an exactly different interpretation obtains today. He touches on themes elaborated elsewhere: the demise of religion, morality and art as forms of consciousness-stabilizing domination; the rise of technology and science along with its technocratic consciousness, and the effects of scientism represented by analytic philosophy. While Habermas admits that philosophy remains as the most radical form of self-reflection, he contents that it is no longer possible to redeem the rational content of the philosophical tradition through philosophy. According to Habermas the place of philosophy then is to stimulate anti-empiricism, to demonstrate "the universality of objectivating thought" expressed in the sciences and to "mobilize the power of radical self-reflection against objectivism and the ideological autonomy of thoughts and institutions." MARLENE DIXON, *"Letter of Resignation."* The letter of resignation to the Sociology Department at McGill University is published here to publicize the academically repressive conditions imposed by senior main-stream sociology faculty over junion faculty who hold an opposing ideological stand. Political pressures to purge her on the alleged grounds of "professional standards" recalls a history of similar disgusting defensive reactions of the status quo academia (Simon Fraser).

## THE ITALIAN COMMUNISTS, No. 1 (October 1974-February 1975)

Via delle Botteghe Oscure, 4, Roma, Italy. ARMANDO COSSUTTA, *"Democratic Vigilance."* In the present period of political crises, economic crises, lack of leadership, and government stalling, the possibility of foreign (CIA) intervention and right wing coup, must be readily acknowledged. Sound the alarm, yes, but not with petit bourgeois alarmism. Cossutta argues that the struggle for the Republic and democracy must take place along the lines of working class unity, uniting all Italian democratic forces, for an "interlocking diversification in political struggle is a condition of victory" over Fascism. The Communist Party's mass rallies are an example of this. In the event of an emergency situation, "every Communist knows what to do." GIAN CARLO PAJETTA, *"Towards the Conference of European, Communist and Workers' Parties."* Pajetta led the PCI delegation at the Warsaw and Budapest meetings; the articles cover both of his speeches and an additional interview. At the Warsaw meeting ("the first consultative meeting of the CPs of Europe") methodological questions and discussion on organizational aspects predominated. The theme was "of unity in diversity" leading to a European collaboration, a new internationalism which accepts the national reality of the different states and each party's different experiences. Thus the problem raised in the meetings was "not one of defining a common program for a socialist Europe, but of seeing what the left-wing and democratic forces in the various parts of Europe have in common." The meetings raised the following issues: overcoming of blocs, security and disarmament, the strengthening of ties with socialist countries, the new role of Europe in the Third World as an alternative to U.S. imperialism, and imperialism in Europe. The question of East Europe's role as an appendage of the Soviet Union was not raised. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, *"How to Deal with the Economic Crisis."* What are the forms of democratic planning needed to overcome the current capitalist crisis which is leading to a new world division of labor? Five PCI theoreticians tacked this problem. Eugenio Peggio argued that Italy must build up its productive apparatus both qualitatively and quantitatively. While the competitive standing of Italy could be improved by a policy of industrial reconversion leading to greater exports, Peggio doubts that the Italian economy will even reach zero growth. Rinaldo Scheda views the current crisis as a total shakedown of the capitalist world. In order to prevent the Italian ruling class from cutting back production and thereby politically weakening the working class, "the public powers must be forced to make the proper choices"; Scheda does not elucidate the choices. Fernando Guilio suggests a possible program for economic growth which would establish relations of equality with

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new Third World nations, challenge the political and economic hegemony of the multinational companies, form a united front with the trade unions and the progressive bourgeoisie, and introduce highly specialized industries in a reconversion program. Bruno Trentin agrees, though he sees little chance for Italy to increase her exports, and opts rather for import controls, rationing, and strict control over investment and supply. Luciano Barco points to the need for popular mobilization at the factory and social levels to manage the new program and to change the mode of production and consumption within Italy. Greater parity in wages must be sought, "with the primary goals of guaranteeing minimum subsistence levels." *"Declaration of the Rome Conference of the Communist Parties of the Capitalist Countries of Europe on the Condition of Women."* It is the dominant forces in capitalist society which have produced and preserved inequality in the status of women and subjugated them to exploitation at the workplace, in the larger society and at home. Real progress in the position of women is not possible under the present system, and working class women around the world must join the general labor movement in fighting monopoly capital and its political allies for a socialist future. "The Communist parties are the parties of women's liberation." EUGENIO PEGGIO, *"Small and Medium-sized Industry in the Italian Crisis."* The spectre of fascism haunts Italy. As part of the PCI united front efforts, Peggio offers a sympathetic analysis of the progressive role which small and medium-sized industry can play in maintaining democracy. If the Italian economy is to survive, exports must be increased and planning must take into account the basic and authentic needs of the people. Peggio calls for sustained growth not only for the big companies but for their small competitors who are facing a credit squeeze by the banks. The plans for modernization of industry must include a role for the small and medium-sized industries in all sectors (as well as cooperation with the trade unions); production must be increased and not curtained as it is at present.

## KAPITALISTATE, No. 3 (1975)

c/o Jim O'Connor, Economics Department, California State University, San Jose, CA 95114. $8.00 per year. BAY AREA KAPITALISTATE GROUP: *"Watergate, or the Eighteenth Brumaire of Richard Nixon."* This article analyzes the structural situation confronting Nixon in his first term of office which provides the framework for understanding why the actions of the Committee to Re-Elect the President got so out of hand. Nixon's personal style is reflected in CREEP's actions, yet personal style alone is insufficient for such an understanding. The "victories" achieved in Nixon's first term (undermining the welfare state budget, the foreign policy of detente, the further erosion of the pluralist form of government through the practical substitution of "advisors" for cabinet ministers and the virtually complete subordination of the legislative branch to the executive, etc.) had the effect of creating much opposition, among both left liberals as well as right-wing conservatives. The real threat posed by this opposition must be taken into account. The article closes with an examination of both the "cowboys vs. yankees" way of viewing Watergate and that which sees the scandal as resulting from competing financial interest groups, with the inadequacies of both these views pointed out. CLARENCE LO, *"The Conflicting Functions of U.S. Military Spending after World War II."* Military spending is viewed in relation to 4 purported functions: 1) national defense; 2) effecting "international trade and capital flows;" 3) supporting aggregate demand; 4) providing investment opportunities for military contractors and the civilian economy. Marxists have tended to stress the functionality of military spending, neglecting to take note of its detrimental side-effects. The author provides a run-down of most widely-held Marxist-oriented theories, and then points out their flaws. JAMES CYPHER, *"An Institutional Economic Theory of the Military-Industrial Complex."* Military spending is yet another time shown in its vital functional relationship to late capitalism in the U.S. The author's "institutional-economic theory of the military-industrial complex" can purportedly "incorporate all the known elements of the military market without engaging in hypotheses which are unsupportable...or which are repeatedly contradicted by the actual workings of the market." LARRY SAWYERS, HOWARD WACHTEL, *"The Distributional Impact of Federal Government Subsidies in the United States."* Through tax loopholes, direct subsidies, low-cost loans, and other assorted governmental policies (including tariff breaks and defense purchases at better-than-market prices), sources of potential government revenues are lost. Not surprisingly, these are recouped from those individuals in the mythically "low-tax," middle-income brackets. The idea of a graduated income tax system is given the lie in this article. Further, nearly all tax breaks are associated with *property* ownership, and favor *unearned* over

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earned income. The article provides a good beginning for a concrete study of whom the government serves. NORA HAMILTON, *"Dependent Capitalism and the State: The Case of Mexico."* Mexico's dependent status on U.S. capitalism is used to explain the development of the Mexican state since the 1930s. BARBARA STALLINGS, RICHARD FEINBERG, *"Economic Policy and State Power: A Case Study of Chile under Allende."* The Chilean economy and the means used to stimulate it by the Allende government are described here. The limits present in each provide an explanation of the ultimate failure of socialism in Chile. BRUCE MacFARLANE, BOB CATLEY, *"Australia, Multinational Corporations and the Pacific Rim Strategy."* The ties binding economic interest in Indonesia to Australian foreign policy are presented and analyzed, especially as they compare to similar U.S. policy. OTTO JACOBI, JOACHIM BERGMANN, WALTHER MUELLER-JENTSCH, *"Problems in Marxist Theories of Inflation."* Inflation's relation to crisis tendencies and its function in the politico-economic system is theoretically analyzed. More popular theories (Mattick, Mandel, Gillman, etc.) are criticized. GERO LENHARDT, *"On the Relationship between the Education System and Capitalist Work Organization."* Education's integrative function is viewed in light of recent works by Altvater, Gorz, Gintis, etc.

## KURSBUCH, No. 37 (October 1974)

Kursbuch-Rotbuch Verlag, 1 Berlin 31, Jenaer Str. 9. 7 DM per issue. Issue theme: *"Verkehrsformen II: Emanzipation in der Gruppe und die 'Kosten' der Solidarität."* Complementing the more theoretical articles of an earlier issue, this second collection stresses the individual and personal difficulties in developing collective practices, especially in left-wing organizations which retain internal structures of domination. Hence the subtitle referring to the "costs" of solidarity. LOTHAR BINGER, *"Kritisches Plädoyer für die Gruppe."* This essay, based on extensive experience in grass-roots radical organizations, provides a sober and subtle analysis of the social psychology of participation in revolutionary groups in West Germany, especially those with Marxist-Leninist influences. Binger's perspective is that of a participant in the revived "emancipation movement" which had been in eclipse since the proliferation of discipline-based Marxist-Leninist groups (more recently on the wane) in the wake of the collapse of the student movement's utopian enthusiasms following 1968-69. The subsequent experience of Leninism, however, has proved no less a disappointment and now "the great catching-up phase begins." Thus the bulk of the discussion deals with problems of the group dynamics of ostensibly revolutionary collectives: the chronic emergence of hierarchical authority, the passiveness of women and their sexual objectification, motivational frustrations of participation, and the phases of development of the group. LISSI STEFFEN, *"Meine Schwierigkeiten mit Genossen: Auszüge aus dem Tagebuch 1972-73."* These excerpts from the diary of a young female activist articulate the frustrations of those whose sense of uselessness within a group leads to resignation and withdrawal. More generally, these internal weaknesses are linked to external failures: revolutionary groups are not credible because their internal contradictions are a source of mistrust by outsiders. *"Warum ist Solidarität so schwierig? Protokoll eines Gesprächs mit drei Arbeitern von Helga Reidemeister (Sommer 1971)."* This transcript of a discussion with three workers reinterates the distance between the abstract conceptions of student activists and the lived reality of working class life. ANJA JOVIC, *"Ich war getrennt von mir selbst..."* The personal and political testament of the developments in a young woman over a 3-year period. She moves from frustrated relations with males into the feminist movement, a process of self-discovery which again allows confident relations with men. And yet the dreams of long-term intimacy, while no longer realizable given her rejection of the isolation imposed by a couple relationship, linger on in moments of loneliness. HELMUT AHRENS, *et al. "Die Homosexualität in uns."* An essay by 5 gay activists in West Berlin outlining the problematic of the homosexual in general and more specifically in relation to left-wing political organizations. *"Red Collective: Jenseits der Familie: Berichtüber eine Dreierbeziehung—ein sexualpolitisches Experiment."* Translation from a pamphlet *The Politics of Sexuality in Capitalism*, published in London in 1972. Reflections of the participants in a triangular relationship (two women and a man) on sex, politics, and the family which speaks sensitvely to the problems of developing alternative modes of heterosexual relations. FRANZISKA GRAF LERNZIEL, *"Wohnen: Bericht über eine Wohlgemeinschaft."* The troubled history of an experiment in cooperative living among left-wing students. KLAUS LAERMANN, *"Kneipengerede: zu einigen Verkehrsformen der Berliner 'linken' Subkultur."* A participant observation analysis of the underground world of more than 100 taverns which have come to dominate the social life of the West Berlin left since 1968. This

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phenomenon, largely unique in West Germany, is linked to a need for occasions which provide for both a sense of comradeship and the freedom for forms of self-presentation which are not burdened by the evaluative and hierarchical constraints of rational discourse. MATTHIS DIENSTAG, *"Trauer um Nixon."* The left should not celebrate Nixon's departure, for after all "he has done more for the anti-imperialist struggle than all the red flags put together." VITTORIA ALLIATA, *"Texanische Monadologie."* Houston experienced and described as having surpassed Los Angeles as the model for the capitalist urban future.

## LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 341 (December 1974)

26, Rue de Condé, Paris 6e. 14.00 F. per issue. JACQUES & CLAUDE BROYELLE, *"La lutte entre les deux voies dans les usines après la révolution culturelle."* This article describes the Pi Lin Pi Kong offensive launched in January 1974 against the creeping revisionism of the post-Cultural Revolution period. Special emphsis is placed on the struggle by workers for control over production, particularly as it relates to the introduction and incorporation of technology. According to the author it is the workers who attempt to initiate technological innovations against the resistance of the managers. For the workers perceive such innovations as providing them with the time and energy to both participate in management and further their education. Moreover, inasmuch as workers participate in the actual design and fabrication of technology, the division of mental and manual labor is diminished. YVES HARDY, *"Portugal: Anatomie de nouveau pouvoir militaire."* An analysis of the events leading to the April Revolution and the following 8 months. MARC RAKOVSKI, *"Le marxisme devant les sociétés soviétiques."* This very dense and seminal essay, written by a Hungarian under a pseudonym, attempts to analyze east European and Soviet societies using a vaguely institutionalist framework. The author contends that in capitalist societies there is a formal separation between functional and social organizations, while in Soviet societies all organizations are formally subordinated to an administrative hierarchy. Primitive accumulation was not the cause of this latter institutional arrangement: rather, this institutional arrangement determined the form that primitive accumulation took. It allowed the total control and mobilization of workers not as wage-earners, but as integral personalities, making it impossible to distinguish between objective difficulties and personal responsibilities. As society developed and total mobilization was no longer necessary, the command structure relaxed providing the space for limited bargaining. This "bargaining" should not be seen as a return to capitalism; it does not presage the horizontal autonomy of the market, but remains bound to the vertical integration of the command structure. The attempts at "liberalization" are thus empirical, particularistic and of limited value. Marxists should support democracy and not "democratization." The article also includes an analysis of Soviet societies' class structure, the role of the unions and party, the contradictions of the state ideology, the introduction of mass consumption models and the near impossibility of creating an organized mass opposition. CLAUDE LISCIA & FRANCOISE ORLIC, *"Les cités de transit: un grand renferment."* An analysis of the ATD (aid à Toute Détresse); a private organization that maintains a number of way-stations for the resocialization of selected families. The authors contend that the French state is attempting to reorganize the private sector to take over certain social welfare control functions. As such the ATD permits access to the future. ANNE DEQUEKER, *"Une grève de 'modules' à Paris VII."* An analysis of a strike by university employees.

## LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 342 (January 1975)

Issue theme: "Chile." RUY MAURO MARINI, *"Deux strategies dans le processus chilien."* An analysis of the "two strategies"—those of the CP and MIR—within the popular front headed by Allende. Sympathetic to the positions advocated by the MIR, the author outlines the impact of the two strategies in the course of the rise and fall of the left. ANGELICA SILVA, PATRICIA SANTA LUCI, *"Les 'cordones industriales': une expression de pouvoir populaire au Chili."* Following up the "two strategies" theme, the authors provide a detailed account of the emergence of popular revolutionary forces and their contradictory relation to the reformist policies of "their" socialist government. R. SANTANA, *"Réforme agraire et alliances de classes sous le gouvernement de l'unité populaire: réflexions critiques."* It is argued that the Allende government served to reinforce capitalist domination of agricultural development though the conditions (political stability, immunity of property, etc.) for its efficient functioning had disappeared. The collapse of the peasant movement had been prepared long before the coup. ARMAND MATTELART,

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*"Firmes multinationales et syndicats jaunes dans le contre-insurrection."* A fascinating examination of the use of the resources of foreign capital in indirectly financing types of "community development" and middle class professionalism ("yellow unions") as part of a policy of long-term "social systems engineering." Arguing that this was more effective than more spectacular forms of direct pressure and interference, Mattelart suggests that this type of middle class professionalism would serve to sabotage the Allende regime and provide the social base for the "corporatism" of the military regime. MICHELE MATTELART, *"Chili: le coup d'état au féminin ou quand les femmes de la bourgeoisie descendent dans la rue."* On the counter-revolutionary uses made of middle class women and traditional images of their place in society. ANDRE GUNDER FRANK, *"Lettre ouverte à Arnold Harberger, directeur du centre d'études Latino-Américaines et professeur d'économie à l'université de Chicago, écrite le 6 août 1974, jour anniversaire de Hiroshima."* A bitter response by an ex-student to an economics professor who has recently suggested that Chile had succeeded in overcoming grave economic chaos "at a relatively light cost." *"Chagrin d'amour mais bonnes affaires."* *"Le sexisme psychanalytique (suite);"* M. NGUYEN, *"Les exclues du département;"* and GILLES DELEUZE, JEAN-FRANCOIS LYOTARD, *"A propos du département de psychoanalyse à Vincennes."* The last three "Chroniques" are all directed in protest against Lacan's authoritarian and arbitrary release of several *chargées* and its relation to both sexism in the psychoanalytic field and the centralized power of the "Ecole Freudienne de Paris." RENEE SAUREL, *"Théâtre: de gros requins dans l'aquarium."* Theater reviews. CHRISTIAN ZIMMER, *"Faux parce que, vrais ourquoi."* Film reviews.

## LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 343 (February 1975)

Issue theme: "Gramsci." DOMINIQUE GRISONI, *"Presentation."* Grisoni points out that while there is consensus in France as to the status of Gramsci as a "prophet," his texts (largely untranslated) have been little discussed; rather, the sterile pseudo-debates about commentaries have served to divert attention from the actual implications of his work. Caught between the alternatives of reformism and isolated, small group action, the Left must recognize that revolutionary organizations, at least in their Leninist form, "no longer correspond to our historical reality." In this context Gramsci can contribute to filling the gap because his reflections 1) refer to advanced capitalist societies; 2) generally escape Stalinist obfuscations; and 3) develop the neglected side of Marx and Engels—the question of superstructures. This number aims at providing a limited survey to stimulate a debate which Grisoni finds has commenced badly in France. DOMINIQUE GRISONI, ROBERT MAGGIORI, *"L'Actualisation de l'utopie."* A subtle reconstruction of Gramsci's philosophy of praxis, theory of ideology and conception of revolution which defends him against charges of idealist voluntarism. He is viewed as providing a point of departure for assuring "not only the real possibility of transforming society in a socialist direction—the Russian October, the Chinese revolution, *tells* us that the 'utopia' of Marx *can* be actualized—but which guarantees equally that it is indeed *socialism* which is going to be built." QUINTON HOARE, *"Gramsci et Bordiga face au Komintern (1921-1926)."* An undocumented re-iteration of the type of political analysis found in Hoare's introduction to the English edition of the *Prison Notebooks*, where Gramsci had been credited (dubiously) with "seeking to develop a genuinely Leninist political practice"—a thesis which contradict's Grisoni's own interpretation. GIORGIO BONOMI, *"La théorie gramscienne de l'état."* A reconstruction, based on close textual and conceptual analysis, of the terminological ambiguities of Gramsci's theory of the state. HUGUES PORTELLI, *"Gramsci et les élections."* With polemical reference to the effort of the "official left" in France to justify its position on elections, Portelli outlines the more subtle reasoning behind Gramsci's sense of electoral tactics in the 1919-24 period and his later elaboration of a general theory of electoral phenomena in the *Notebooks*. The "electoralist interpretation" of his position is characterized as a travesty which does not take into account his overall position; at the same time, for Gramsci, elections were to have an important function in socialist society where voting would not be the end, but the point of departure for participation. NICOLA BADALONI, *"L'historicisme de Gramsci face au Marxisme contemporain."* Departing from a confusing reference to Popper's idiosyncratic use of "historicism," Baldoni attempts to specify the meaning of Gramsci's conception—not to be understood as a philosophy of "lived experience" but as a theory of revolutionary praxis concerned with the relation between a "réalisme critique" and the "actualisation de l'utopie" (a notion which inspires the essay of Grisoni and Maggiori). Some objections are raised with respect to the anti-historicism of Della Volpe and Althusser. Yet, Badaloni curiously concludes that "Marxist historicism (even

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understood in Gramsci's fashion) does not resolve in itself the totality of Marxist theory. The theoretical dimension of it is excluded." SERGIO CAPRIOGLIO, *"Présentation d'un inédit de Gramsci."* A review of Gramsci's commentaries from 1917-20 on the Turin uprising of August 1917. ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *"Le Caporetto du front intérieur."* The suffering caused by the collapse of the Italian army and the famine in Turin is attributed to the greed and incompetence of the administrative classes and the apparatus created by the war effort.

## LES TEMPS MODERNES, No. 344 (March 1975)

CATHERINE VALABREGUE, *"Manières de vivre."* A series of interviews with a prostitute and several gay men and women. FRANÇOIS GEORGE, *"Economie politique et théologie."* Reflections on the theological significance of capitalism. The fetishism of commodities is literally a religion. Value has become the new idol, and the moral law has been transformed into the infinite task of accumulation. The sacred world of value covers over the profane realm of the sensible – the indifference of exchange cancels the particularity of the body, of nature, of art. Unfortunately dogmatic Marxism is ignorant of this process and tries to establish itself as a new religion founded upon the word of Marx, the Father. Rather Marxism needs to recover the dimension of praxis as an interlacing of subject and object in order to overcome the false universality of capitalism. This essay is of particular interest to *Telos* readers. JEANETTE COLOMBEL, *"Lip, Larzac refoules..."* The struggles of Larzac and Lip are significant in that they proclaim a new kind of struggle which is not defensively fought but is born from the assertion of the right to live and decide the way of life that one wants to maintain. They introduce a new concept of revolutionary time as discontinuous which breaks the illusion of a coherent system of unlimited growth and technical progressa and creates a rupture in the whole. The problem is to unify these and other struggles without restoring the pyramidal continuity of the system itself. XXX, *"L'Art de vivre dans un pays asservi."* The fate of Czech student leader Jiri Muller, imprisoned since 1972, and of other political prisoners and dissidents is described in a letter from Prague. COLLECTIF VIETNAM DE JUSSIEU, *"Loin de Vietnam."* Protest against American aggression in Vietnam is not merely of external interest but is a constitutive element in the struggle of the popular masses of the West for their own liberation. A new internationalism needs to be developed on the basis of an internalization of anti-imperialist struggles.

## LIBERATION, Vol. 19, No. 3 (March-April 1975)

339 Lafayette St., New York, NY, 10012. $1.00 per issue. CAROL ANDREAS, *"Chilean Diary."* The author describes from personal experience some of the changes in the lives of women during the Chilean revolutionary process. One statement from this account stood out as a poignant comment on where history and biography intersect affecting the consciousness of the people in their everyday lives. After the coup, when many were afraid to show sympathy or concern for the families of those who had been killed or detailed by the police, it was said that "campesinos have to support whatever government is in power, just like poor people everywhere." FRED LANDIS, *"Psychological Warfare in Chile: The CIA Makes Headlines."* The fear of 'cancer communism' harbored by the Chilean middle and upper classes was capitalized on by the CIA in the scare campaign known infamously as Project Camelot (despite official allegations that it was cancelled). The article illustrated the kind of disgusting 'grey' (half-truths) and 'black' (outright lies) propaganda manufactured by the CIA in alliance with the editors of 'El Mercurio' and other newspapers, linking Allende's socialism with fascism, Soviet tanks, terrorism, extremism, economic crisis, concentration camps, an end to civil liberties and so on. This, in conjunction with the equally devastating economic tactics, played on the fears of the armed forces of an imminent communist takeover and eventually galvanized the right-wing forces to September's coup. ARIEL DORFMAN, ARMAND MATTELART, *"How to Read Donald Duck."* A brilliant excerpt from a book by the same title demonstrating that imperialism is as much cultural as economic. Similar to the insidious forms of economic domination operating under the guise of development and foreign aid, the actual pillage by Donald and his nephews of 'ancient civilizations' is obfuscated and mystified by the magic of an adventurous treasure hunt. The gold, like bananas, copper, tin and cattle, has no history, has no owner (except a barely perceptible past civilization), embodies no labor or surplus-value, and requires no labor for its extraction. Objects exorcised of guilt are there to be discovered, picked and consumed. This is the bourgeois dream world where the capitalist can accumulate wealth without facing the producers. Furthermore, just as the bourgeoisie defines its system as eternal and consequently, sees any

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efforts to pose alternatives to wealth and private property as evil, any threats to Donald's treasure can only be criminal. There is an implicit analogy drawn between the ill-educated, clumsy, half-witted 'thieves' of Disneyworld and the working class who, like hoodlums, can never possibly improve society. If the bourgeoisie now controls capital, it is not because of exploitation but because of superior intelligence and the inherent good of its system. The article demonstrates very well how a dominant culture universalizes its most subtle and pernicious values.

## LIBERATION, Vol. 19, No. 4 (May 1975)

THE EDITORS, *"Notes from the Collective."* What does the end of the Vietnam War mean fot the people of Vietnam and the people of America? The scenario now includes the unification and social reconstruction of Vietnam, possible new forms of social conflict in Southeast Asia, and some unfinished business at home: unconditional amnesty, humanitarian reparation payments, and a war crimes tribunal. STEVE PACKARD, *"Steelmill Blues."* In an industry where communication is by sabotage and speedup means working five hours a day instead of four, workplace organizing is a difficult task. Packard joined an unnamed Chicago "sect group" in 1971 and went off to organize the Gary works of US Steel, because, for the radicals, "basic industry is the place to be." He found himself up against an inert union, a racially divided workforce, dissension within his own Marxist-Leninist group, and the company's attempts to promote him, an educated, WASPish, hippie-type. Although he and his group are short on theory and goals, his comments on the boredom and monotony of the workplace, the prevalence of sabotage and slowdowns, and the desolation in the lives of the steelworkers around him are interesting. He provides a devastating critique of the highly flaunted union democracy of Local 1014 and of the union's function at the workplace (no one in his shop knew who their shop steward was). It may be that the election of rank and file candidate Ed Sadlowski as regional director for the Gary-Chicago union district will change all that. One can only hope that Packard's book (from which this article is excerpted) will offer a sounder critique of the problems of workplace organizing rather than the witty-hippy polemics presented here. GRACE PALEY, *"The Baby Myth."* Paley, a fiction writer, takes a critical but cursory look at the Vietnam babylift and suggests that the maneuver was a function of the zeal of adoption agency bureaucrats, the "imperial greed" of World Airways President Ed Daly, and the wishful thinking of government officials who hoped to wring more military aid out of Congressional hearts. Disjointed, emotional and inconclusive, the article reviews the fate of orphans of other wars. MARCIA SALO RIZZI, *"The Human Comedy of Alice Neel."* Rizzi, a New York artist, takes a look at the paintings of Alice Neel, a veteran of the WPA who has gained popularity recently in some circles for her compassionate, emotive portraits of the people around her in the New York streets. In the accompanying interview, Neel answers some rather trite questions with candor, and offers some insight into the political pressures which acted upon the WPA artists, who occasionally had their canvasses destroyed. GEORGE BENELLO, *"The Utopian Urge."* All the basic tenets of the counter-culture are here. The article rushes into its subject—"what is real?" Indeed, what is real? Human consciousness, one-dimensionality, mysticism, pervasive "phoniness," western rationalism, laws of reason, deeper inward reality, social pathology, primitive polymorphous perversism, perfect orgasm, Eros, de-repression, Madison Avenue, alienation, liberation, dialectics, new school forms, the Third Force, Zen, Tao, no-mind, personal power, Avidaya, mega-machine, etc. etc. Real is the state of polymorphous, pregenital sexuality! The heroes of this counter-culture are Salinger, Heinlein, Castanada, Freud, Reich, Brown, Marcuse, the Frankfurt School, Maslow, Lukacs, Marx, Fromm, Mumford and Diamond.

## L'HOMME ET LA SOCIETE, Nos. 33-34 (July-December 1975)

Editions Anthropos, 12 avenue du Maine, Paris 15. One year subscription: 90F. Issue theme: "Economie et tiers-monde." THEOTONIO DOS SANTOS, *"Les sociétés multinationales [une mise au point marxiste)."* Discusses the evolution and current status of multinationals, which the author characterizes as corporations in which foreign sales, investment, and profits play a principle role in the organizational structure as a whole. Dos Santos concludes by outlining the contradictions which arise from the international division of labor engendered by the internationals, centering on class relations at both the national and international levels. RUDOLFO STAVENHAGEN, *"Structures agraires et sous-développement en afrique et en amérique latine."* A comparative study which outlines the differing pre-capitalist modes of production which existed in Latin America and Africa before colonization, the respective

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processes of colonization, the respective means by which the indigenous modes of production were transformed, subordinated, or absorbed by colonization, and the characteristics and role of agrarian capitalism in each continent. Although necessarily sketchy, this essay provides some important insights and problems for further research. CLAUDE MEILLASSOUX, *"Développement ou exploitation."* Relates the exploitative effects of the "politics of aid" practiced by the core capitalist states to the African famine, arguing that the famine has provided an excellent opportunity for the spread of agrarian capitalism (which itself contributes to the effects of the famine), and for profit. MOISES IKONICOFF, *"Le transfert de technologie et les conditions de l'industrialisation dans le tiers-monde."* Examines the effect of technology transfer (i.e., exportation of technological methods developed in the U.S. and Western Europe) on industrialization in the Third World. PABLO GONZALES CASANOVA, *"La voie pacifique vers le socialisme et l'expérience chilienne."* Examines the implications of the Chilean experience for a peaceful transition to socialism in Latin America from a position sympathetic to Allende's Popular Unity government. OSIRIS CECCONI, *"Rapports de l'économique et du politique dans la croissance de l'agriculture: le cas de l'algérie."* Focusing on the fourth Algerian economic plan for 1970-73, the author examines the relationship between the political aims of the plan and its economic reality in terms of agricultural development. Cecconi concludes that a form of state capitalism is at work in Algeria. FERNANDO HENRIQUE CARDOSO, *" 'Théorie de la dependance' ou analyses concrètes de situations de dependance."* Examines the theoretical utility of the "theory" of dependency, arguing for the specificity of dependency in each case, and for an analysis which treats internal and external structures as continuous rather than as separate spheres. Cardoso thereby wishes to avoid a theory of dependency which *a priori* obscures the unique structures of relationships obtaining in any given instance of dependency. The author also includes a critique of Lenin's notion of imperialism in terms of its contemporary validity. TRAN THANH VIET, *"Sur quelques ostacles épistémologiques à l'approche du mode de production asiatique."* Discusses some of the analytic difficulties inherent in the notions of "asiatic mode of production" and "feudalism" in discussing the development of Asian economies and their place in the contemporary world economy. RENE GALLISSOT, *"Rosa Luxemburg et la colonisation."* Examines Luxemburg's ideas on colonialism and relates them to those of Marx and Engels, against which they are seen as an advance. ISAAC GUELFAT, *"Un tournant dans la pensée économique aux états-unis."* Reviews some recent literature on economic theory from the U.S. J.F. DE RAYMOND, *"Besoins et irrationalité du capitalisme."* An examination of the relationship between needs and rationality in capitalism, beginning with its expression in marginal utility theory. SAMIR AMIN, ISABELLE EYNARD, *"Los Angeles, united states of plastiks."* Continuing the work begun in the last issue by Amin, this essay focuses on Los Angeles as the most typical of U.S. cities, and as the expression of the barbarism of capitalist culture. The authors argue that this culture does not and cannot develop toward a socialist culture. PAUL-HENRI CHOMBART DE LAUWE, *"Quelle culture pour quel sujet?"* ANDRE REGNIER, *"Les sondages et leurs dangers."* Critically appraises the use of questionnaires in social science research.

**MONTHLY REVIEW**, Vol. 26, No. 11 (April 1975)

62 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011. $.85 this issue. PAUL M. SWEEZY, HARRY MAGDOFF, *"The Economic Crisis in Historical Perspective—Part II."* This is a follow-up on the March MR article on U.S. government intervention in the economy. The editors anticipate a revival of the old Reconstruction Finance Corporation with strength enough to realize a threefold purpose: (1) reverse the deteriorating tendency in corporate debt-equity rations; (2) strengthen corporate capital structures enough to enable companies to raise money through sale of stocks instead of bonds; and (3) provide corporations with capital necessary for privately unprofitable large projects essential to the capitalist system as a whole. Thus, Sweezy and Magdoff see the present economic crisis of "stagflation" producing a great leap forward into state capitalism in the U.S. MICHEL CHOSSUDOVSKY, *"Chicago Economics, Chilean Style."* The author shows that the Chilean Military Junta's model of economic and social organization coincides closely with the propositions of the "Chicago model" of competitive capitalism, resulting in the "scientistic" repression of the Chilean people. AZINNA NWAFOR, *"Imperialism and Revolution in Africa."* A summary and analysis of an Amilcar Cabral article, "Foundations and Objectives of National Liberation in Relation to Social Structure," in which Cabral's Leninist approach reveals imperialism's positive and negative aspects. By distinguishing between "colonialism" and "neo-colonialism" Cabral reveals that the historical mission of imperialism is still incomplete,

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necessitating a "return to history" through the concrete and correct adaptation of a political proletarian vanguard approach to the African revolutionary situation. AN OBSERVER, *"The Hungarian New Left: Sociology and Revolution."* A far better translation of this article appeared in *Telos*, no. 17 (Fall 1973).

## MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 27, No. 1 (May 1975)

PAUL M. SWEEZY, HARRY MAGDOFF, *"The Historic Victory in Indochina."* This article, written after the fall of Phnom Penh and anticipating the liberation of Vietnam, reviews the 1973 Paris Accords, showing that they are in essence a reaffirmation of the 1954 Geneva Agreement which the U.S. refused to sign. The editors also debunk the fantastic stories of Viet Cong massacres, and conclude by pointing out the necessity for social harmony if the Vietnamese people are to succeed in their task of reconstruction. ERNEST FEDER, *"The Peasants' Perspectives in the Underdeveloped Countries."* This article is a summary in the form of six theses of the author's 1973 inaugural address for the Institute of Social Studies, the Hague. It is intended as a contribution to the discussion of the classical role of the peasantry as that sector of the working population which bears the major costs of development in the Third World. Feder focuses on the external and internal pressures on underdeveloped nations which will make it likely that radical change will remain contained for the next generation, even while their contradictions deepen. HILARY MODELL, HOWARD WAITZKIN, *"Health Care and Socialism in Chile."* Contending that the Popular Unity government of Allende reproduced its major conflicts and contradictions in its attempts to restructure the Chilean health system, this article analyses (1) the changes that occurred in health care during the Allende period, (2) the political and economic constraints that limited the viability of the socialized health system, and (3) the dismantling of the health system that has occurred under the present junta, concluding with a discussion of the relationships between health care and revolutionary social change.

## MONTHLY REVIEW, Vol. 27, No. 2 (June 1975)

PAUL M. SWEEZY, HARRY MAGDOFF, *"Capitalism and Unemployment."* The June MR editorial examines the complexities and official deceptions involved in determining the state of employment of the U.S. labor force. First, the form of seasonally adjusted averages obscures the content of flux in employment statistics. Second, official labor-force statistics overestimate employment in two ways: (1) by including part-time as well as full-time workers, and (2) by including unpaid family workers. To these groups of disguised unemployed may be added another, the sub-employed (those paid below the official poverty line). Third, official statistics underestimate the size of the labor force through the use of a restricted definition of employment; the editors' recalculations reveal that official statistics show only two-thirds of the real unemployment, for even with conservative assumptions Sweezy and Magdoff show unemployment to be at least 13.6% of the labor force. This means that 36 million jobs will have to be created in the next decade to combat unemployment, while only 16.6 million are forecast. V. LEWIS BASSIE, *"A Look Beyond 1975."* This March 1975 editorial reprint from the *Illinois Business Review* features an economic analysis of the U.S. which shows that there is an extremely low degree of probability that the current recession will improve shortly. HARRY BRAVERMAN, *"Work and Unemployment."* The text of a talk given at a number of universities in March and April focuses on the degradation of labor under modern capitalism. Specifically it is alienated labor, for everything about the productive process but the wage is removed from the worker's interest, claim and control for the purpose of the extraction of a surplus for capital accumulation. This leads to a fragmentation of tasks in the division of labor as an administrative necessity, which is contrasted with the technological trend towards the reunification of the collective but mindless productive process. Close examination of the outcome of a rapidly growing output without a corresponding growth in the number of workers (i.e., real unemployment) shows a growing industrial reserve army subject to jobless pauperization—the price of a life of wage labor under capitalism. STEVEN KOVACS, *"Lucia: Style and Meaning in Revolutionary Film."* This eloquent review of Cuban film-maker Humberto Solas' 1969 film *Lucia* treats this epic story of Cuba's liberation seen through the lives of three women as a prime example of the new power of revolutionary Third World cinema. The three periods examined—the struggle for independence from Spain in the 1890s, the overthrow of the Machada in 1932, and the establishment of the present revolutionary regime in the 1960s—mirror the distant epochs of Cuban history as well as the major phases in the political struggle of Latin American nations and the Third World in general. Different from both the Hollywood historical pageant

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and the strictly realistic reconstruction, Solas' living history avoids didacticism by focusing on personal aspects of the historical development of collective political consciousness. That the leading characters are women presented as independent as well as credible human beings also makes each episode a different stage in the liberation of women, thus joining the transformation of personal and social relationships together in one film that is revolutionary in form as well as content.

## NEW EDINBURGH REVIEW, Nos. 23-24

1 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9LW, Scotland. Annual subscription: 90p. ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *"Lettere dal Carcere."* This selection represents the first part of Hamish Henderson's translation of the complete 1947 Einaudi first edition of Gramsci's prison letters. The translation was finished 25 years ago, but has never before been published in full. This represents an invaluable contribution to the English language material on Gramsci. Henderson's translations are far superior to thoe of Lynn Lawner (in Gramsci, *Letters from Prison*, Harper & Row, 1973), restoring the syntax and beauty of the original Italian. In addition, these translations include all of the letters which were then available to Henderson (218), although some are incomplete. Since 1947 new letters were discovered, but the Lawner translation includes only 94 (of the 450 now available), many of which are incomplete, and the selection is terrible. Henderson's letters allow the reader a much greater opportunity to experience the range of Gramsci's thoughts. These letters are indispensible for an understanding of Gramsci's personality as well as for the reading of his *Prison Notebooks*. The remaining part of Henderson's translation appears in the following issue. GWYN A. WILLIAMS, *"Proletarian Forms: Antonio Gramsci, the Turin Movement of Factory Councils and the Origins of Italian Communism."* The first of a two-part essay, in which Williams provides a sketch of Italian economic and political history from 1900 to 1919, centering on the origins of the *L'Ordine Nuovo* group in Turin. The article presents no new material, and tends to see Gramsci's development as a movement towards "Leninism," whatever that means. Nevertheless, this essay can be useful as a brief introduction to the period.

## NEW EDINBURGH REVIEW, Nos. 25-26

ANTONIO GRAMSCI, *"Lettere dal Carcere."* This selection concludes the Hamish Henderson translation of the 218 letters contained in the 1947 Einaudi first edition of Gramsci's prison letters, begun in the previous issue. GWYN A. WILLIAMS, *"Proletarian Forms: Gramsci, Councils, Communism 1919-20: a Documentary Analysis."* The concluding installment of Williams' contribution, begun in the last issue. Abandoning his original historical approach, Williams here presents fourteen articles from *L'Ordine Nuovo* and one from *Avanti*, all but three carrying Gramsci's byline, together with introductory notes and commentary. Seven of these articles have already appeared in English in *New Left Review*, no. 51 (January 1968). The publication of previously untranslated articles from *L'Ordine Nuovo* can only be a positive event; the Williams' commentary, however, is of considerably less value. All of the material contained in this and the previous section of Williams' contribution, together with additional material will be published in book form by Pluto Press under the title *Proletarian Order*.

## NEW EDINBURGH REVIEW, No. 27

STEPHEN WHITE, *"Gramsci and Proletarian Power."* This and all of the following articles are based on the papers read at the First National Day Conference on Gramsci, held in June 1974 at Edinburgh University. White criticizes the PCI's policies from what he takes to be a Gramscian perspective, arguing for point of production organization and against electoralism. ANNE F. SHOWSTACK, *"Gramsci's Interpretation of Italian Fascism."* An essentially exegetic essay on one aspect of Gramsci's work, which nevertheless smuggles in a "conjunctural" reading, which owes more to Althusser than to Gramsci. GWYN WILLIAMS, *"The Making and Unmaking of Antonio Gramsci."* Williams traces the fluctuations of the "myth" of Gramsci, as developed by the PCI in the years since his death. Also included is a somewhat indulgent *mea culpa* for the "myth" that he and other English-speaking intellectuals helped to create of Gramsci as a "democratic" communist. Having now found the "real" Gramsci situated in the "ultra-left," the author has embarked on a new mission of rehabilitation. STEPHEN WHITE, *"Gramsci in Soviet Historiography."* An essentially bibliographic account. V.G. KIERNAN, *"Gramsci and the Other Continents."* Kiernan compiles some of Gramsci's thoughts on non-European societies in an attempt to establish his significance as a theorist for these areas as well as the industrialized countries of Europe. The author seeks to insert Gramsci as a bridge from Marx to Mao.

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CHARLES KEITH MAISELS, *"Gramsci: Between Two Internationals."* A Diamat distortion of Gramsci, which includes praises of Stalin and a deep anti-intellectualism. An incredibly hideous, poisonous essay. ARTURO LABRIOLA, *"Italian Socialism."* Reprinted from a British publication of 1904, this is an essay by an anarcho-syndicalist who turned Fascist several years after writing this piece, which is an attack on the reformist policies of the PSI leadership. Not to be confused with the Italian Marxist, Antonio Labriola.

## NEW GERMAN CRITIQUE, No. 5 (Spring 1975)

Box 413, German Department, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI 53201. $6.00 per year. BERND WITTE, *"Benjamin and Lukács: Historical Notes on the Relationship between their Political and Aesthetic Theories."* The Brecht-Lukács debate, recently renewed, leads to a reopening of the Benjamin-Lukács debate. Once again, poor Lukács' resurrection of classicism is demonstrated inadequate. In an interesting discussion, unknown for the most part in English, Benjamin's aesthetic method—"to reconstruct history from a single thoroughly understood moment and thus transform it"—proves to be more fruitful. WALTER BENJAMIN, *"Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian."* An interesting discourse on the case of one art collector, which leads Benjamin to comment on a wide range of topics—psychology, history, values, art, and their interrelation. KARSTEN WITTE, *"Introduction to Kracauer's 'The Mass Ornament'."* The author provides the necessary socio-historical background for an understanding of Kracauer's following piece. SIEGFRIED KRACAUER, *"The Mass Ornament."* The fascist phenomenon of spectacular pageants carried out with military precision is viewed in relation to the epoch as a whole. It can be seen not only in Germany (where it reached its most extreme manifestation, perhaps) but also in the regimented dancing in theater productions and movies throughout Western civilization at the time. Capitalism and the coincident necessity for increased rationalization are seen as roots for the abstraction present in the mass ornament. DONNA BAKER, *"Nazism and the Petit Bourgeois Protagonist: The Novels of Grass, Böll and Mann." Billiards at half past nine, The Tin Drum,* and *Doctor Faustus* are contrasted, with the results being used not only as the kernel for criticisms of the respective authors, but also as the basis for insights into the petty bourgeois response to fascism. TRENT SCHROYER, *"The Repoliticization of the Relations of Production: An Interpretation of Habermas' Theory of Late Capitalist Development."* A rehash of Habermas' theory of the problems of legitimation with respect to late capitalist crises. Politics becomes a matter of communication, with crises resulting from breakdowns in the former. Unfortunately, the article remains at the level of, let us say, "creative" exposition, with no room given to possible criticisms of Habermas. JOACHIM BARK, *"A Discussion of Current Positions and Classroom Texts."* The author continues a report begun in the first issue of NGC on recent developments in German educational literature on pedagogic technique. RAINER PARIS, *"Class Structure and Legitimatory Public Sphere."* The author examines East European "transitional" societies, looking for signs of burgeoning classes, the destruction of the public sphere, and incipient totalitarianism. The result is the old-hat conclusion that socialism doesn't really exist in the Soviet bloc.

## NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 89 (January-February 1975)

7 Carlisle Street, London W1V 6NL, England. Annual subscription $16.00 US. NORMAN GERAS, *"Rosa Luxemburg after 1905."* Geras attempts a comparative analysis of the theories of revolution of Lenin, Luxemburg and Trotsky between 1905 and 1917, concentrating on Luxemburg. He explicates the different nuances of the three theorists in arguing that no one of their conceptions can be reduced to that of any other. Geras' predisposition is in favor of Trotsky, whom he takes to have had the most advanced theory, to which the others finally caught up. JEAN GARDINER, *"Women's Domestic Labour."* Prompted by Wally Seccombe's essay, "The Housewife and her Labour under Capitalism" (NLR, no. 83), Gardiner argues that domestic labor does not create value, but does contribute to surplus value by reducing the subsistence level of labor. Consequently, during economic contraction, privatized domestic labor is needed by the capitalist economy, while during expansion the socialization of domestic labor is tolerated in order to expand the number of wage workers and the available market. In criticizing Seccombe, she stresses "unequal exchange" in the relationship between wage-earning males and housewives. MARGARET COULSON, BRANKA MAGAS, HILARY WAINWRIGHT, *"The Housewife and Her Labour under Capitalism—a Critique."* Another critique of Seccombe's article, arguing that under capitalism women are both domestic and wage laborers, and that domestic labor is not socially necessary labor "in the Marxist sense." The authors attempt to argue that "the

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liberation of women is a strategic interest of the working class," and for a "vanguard" organization representing all oppressed groups. GILBERT PADOUL, *"China 1974: Problems not Models."* Originally published in *Esprit* in 1974, this essay provides a sobering view of Chinese political and economic development. Although weakest at the empirical level, and overly critical at points, Padoul does effectively draw the parameters of the possible lessons of the Chinese revolution for the European Left, particularly in the areas of industrialism and depoliticization. CLAUDE AUBERT, *"People's Communes—How to Use the Standard Visit."* Also published in *Esprit* in 1974, this article is an attempt to empirically show that most Chinese peasants still exist at a near-subsistence level. The results of this analysis conflict with those even of non-socialist economists from the U.S., but the problem lies in the approach, which is purely a positivist empiricism. Quantitative analysis alone will not demonstrate either the success or the failure of the Chinese revolution.

## NEW LEFT REVIEW, No. 90 (March-April 1975)

ERNEST MANDEL, *"The Industrial Cycle in Late Capitalism."* Extracted from the author's forthcoming book, *Late Capitalism* (NLB, 1975), this is an important essay which discusses capitalist development since WWII. Mandel argues that "the major economic expansion of late capitalism... has solved none of the fundamental internal contradictions of the capitalist mode of production. The periodical oscillation of investments determined by the periodical oscillation of the average rate of profit, remains the rule." HENRI LEFEBVRE, *"What is the Historical Past?"* Originally published in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1959, this essay is a reflection upon Albert Soboul's *Les Sans-Culottes Parisiens en l'an II.* Lefebvre concludes that, because all significant social phenomena, such as the French Revolution, represent a "conjuncture" of a virtually inexhaustible series of separate elements, the work of successive historians can have no limits, each separate work adding to the totality of historical contents. At the same time, the phenomenon in question represents a process which makes certain events possible. Through detailed historical research, the moment of possibility can be reinserted into history. These factors result in the concept of "objective relativism" in historiography, by which Lefebvre seeks to establish the relationship between subject and object in historical study. GARETH STEDMAN JONES, *"Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution."* An extended review of John Foster's new book of the same title (which is receiving a great deal of attention in England), this essay is significant in its own right. Jones criticizes Foster for the latter's formalism, which is especially evident in his use of Lenin's concept of class consciousness to describe what were, in Jones' analysis, still embryonic forms of revolutionary class struggle. Jones makes some interesting distinctions between manufacturing and industrial capitalism and the production relations which characterize them, and provides a stimulating assessment of changes within the British working-class in the 19th century. IAN STEEDMAN, *"Value, Price and Profit."* In this short, but extremely dense article, the author seeks to utilize the work of Piero Sraffa to demonstrate that the derivation of prices from value is impossible, and that the tendency of the rate of profit to fall in Marx's work is theoretically unfounded. TERRY EAGLETON, *"Ideology and Literary Form."* Employing his collection of Althusserian-structuralist concepts, Eagleton selectively surveys English literature from Eliot to Lawrence attempting to show that an "organicist" ideology was being formed in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The conclusion is never in doubt as the "over-determinations" and "conjunctures" all fall predictably into place.

## OUR GENERATION, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Winter 1975)

3934 Rue St. Urbain, Montreal, Que. Canada. $1.50 per issue. R.T. NAYLOR, *"Canada's International Commercial Expansion to 1914."* This article substantially elaborates Naylor's controversial neo- (or some would claim, "non-") Marxist thesis that the capitalist class in Canada did not have an interest in the industrial development of an independent country and preferred a subsidiary role to foreign capital—a theme first introduced in "The Rise and Fall of the Third Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence," published in *Capitalism and the National Question,* ed. Gary Teeple. Here he documents the paralleling moments that have shaped Canada's economy: the development of a staple economy whereby Canada functioned as a resource hinterland for a metropolitan power; the enormous flow of British portfolio capital to finance the building of Canadian infrastructure; the encouragement of branch plant industries to serve the empire as well as local interests. At the same time the mercantile capitalists used their control of the state structure, their banks and insurance companies to turn Canada into a mini-metropolis. Capital flowed freely into the Caribbean and South America into finance and

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utilities, extracting substantial returns, while long-term investments flowed to the U.S. Whereas the former took the form of dominating, aggressive enterprises representing substantial economic control, the latter strengthened American economic power. Meanwhile dividends on British investments in Canada flowed back to Britain. The Latin American investments in effect mitigated the drain on the Canadian balance of payments composed by the flow of investments to the U.S. and repatriated earnings to Britain. HENRY MILNER, *"City Politics: Some Possibilities."* More on the historical origins, operation and success of the Montreal Citizens Movement, a progressive municipal party founded May 1974. The MCM represented an effective step toward developing collective politics in the form of direct mass action. FRED CALOREN, *"The Economics of Misery."* Caloren reports some of his findings from his recently published study, *Layoffs, Shutdowns and Closures in Ontario Manufacturing, Mining and Trade Establishments*. The immediate consequence of over-production, competitive undercutting and technological displacement of labor, layoffs are situated within "the collective and mutually reinforcing drive for private individual gain." The argument is not new: his proposal to eradicate layoffs is nothing short of a socialist society. He indirectly criticizes the deindustrialization thesis prevalent among some Canadian nationalists. Foreign ownership does not necessarily translate into more layoffs.

## RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 9, No. 1 (January-February 1975)

Box B, Cambridge, Mass. 02140. Subscription $5.00 per year. ARTHUR MacEWEN, *"Changes in World Capitalism and the Current Crises of the U.S. Economy."* Describing the creation and benefits of U.S. hegemony since the end of WWII, this essay examines the continuous increase in the integration of world capitalism along with its simultaneous destabilization. This apparent contradiction and its far-reaching implications is understood to have put the U.S. economy of the 1970s in such a precarious position. The central role of international affairs in furthering the continuation of the crises is also examined. MARTIN GLABERMAN, *"Black Cats, White Cats, Wildcats: Auto Workers in Detroit."* Originally published in 1969 in *Speak Out*, this brief history of the Detroit auto workers begins with 1941 when the Ford plant was first organized and serves as an introduction to the article which follows. DAN GEORGAKAS, MARVIN SURKIN, *"Niggermation in Auto: Company Policy and the Rise of Black Caucuses."* Excerpted from the authors' forthcoming book, *Detroit: I Do Mind Dying*, this is an account of the activity of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in a Detroit Chrysler plant in the late 1960s and early 1970s. WOVOKA, *"Motown...and the Heart Attack Machine."* This short history of the Motown recording artists traces their development from early blues through jazz up to rock music. It suggests that its creation should be understood as an attempt by these people to free themselves from working in the auto plants. MIKE DAVIS, *"The Stop Watch and the Wooden Shoe: Scientific Management and the Industrial Workers of the World."* Beginning with a presentation of F.W. Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management*, this essay discusses the implementation of "Taylorism" throughout major industry and the action taken by the IWW in response to it. ROSALYN FRAAD BAXANDALL, *"Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: The Early Years."* Originally the first half of an introduction to a collection of her writings on women and feminism (which was to be published by AIMS but for various reasons has been cancelled) this infromative, though at times gossipy, biographical sketch is of Flynn's work as labor organizer and legal defense worker for the IWW.

## RADICAL AMERICA, Vol. 9, No. 3 (May-June 1975)

EILEEN WHALEN, KEN LAWRENCE, *"American Workers and Liberation Struggles in Southern Africa: The Boycott of Coal and Chrome."* This article, originally presented as a paper at the Organizing Conference to Stop Southern Africal Coal in Atlanta, outlines briefly the problem of blacks in the white-dominated countries of South Africa and political strategies for American leftists and workers to assist in their struggle. Discusses attempts to organize a boycott against the Southern Company which had contracted to import Azanian coal to fuel its power plants. CHRISTOPHER KNOWLES, *"Revolutionary Trade Unionism in Argentina: Interview with Augustin Tosco."* Knowles provides an introduction to and conducts an interview with Augustin Tosco, a Marxist leader of the Light and Power Union in Cordoba, Argentina. In his introduction Knowles situates Tosco's policies and actions and those of the Argentinian radical labor movement in historical context and in light of the present policies of Isabel Peron's government. In his interview, Tosco presents the outlook and tactics of his union in the present situation. THEODORE ALLEN, *"'...They Would have Destroyed Me': Slavery and the*

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*Origins of Racism."* Allen develops the thesis, with the aid of Marxist categories and historical documents, that racial slavery in 19th century America had its origins in the non-slavery of the Southern white proletariat. Specifically, plantation owners instituted a system of social control whereby poor white laborers were used as enforcers of racial domination. The article mainly explores this process which brings about the antagonism between poor whites and black slaves. *"Racism and Busing in Boston: Comments and Criticism."* Eight responses are published here in response to RA's November-December 1974 editorial on "Racism and Busing in Boston." Jim Green and Allen Hunter respond for the editors of the journal.

## RADICAL PHILOSOPHERS' NEWSJOURNAL, Vol. 4 (January 1975)

BERNIE GENDRON, *"Capitalism and Poverty."* This critical response to the "meliorist theory" (i.e., that the incidence of poverty in America is decreasing and will soon be eradicated) surveys several radical responses while maintaining that any radical critique of poverty must subscribe to the variable income approach (rather than a relative approach). *"The Case of Peter Laska."* Consisting of two letters, one by Laska to the students of the Marxism and Social Philosophy courses at the University of Arizona, and the other by Jeffrie Murphy, the head of the philosophy department, to Laska, presents the conditions of Laska's resignation and the department's qualified reappointment of him. BILL McBRIDE, *"Philosophy in Yugoslavia: An Update."* Having previously reported on the Korcula Summer School and on the situation of Yugoslav philosophy, in particular on the intensive efforts to remove 8 Belgrade philosophers (in RPN* NO. 2), this article reports the events which have taken place since then. LARRY BLUM, ROBERT COGAN, *"Radical Teaching."* Presenting material on teaching, this section gives a reading list for and description on a course on equality. It also comments on various experiences with discussion groups and grading. FRANK BOVE, *"Radical Intellectuals and the Revolutionary Party."* Originally presented at the fourth conference on Marxist Activist Philosophers, this essay criticizes the ahistorical and uncritical adoption of the Leninist model by the CP and various left sects in this country. In attempting to develop new guidelines for organization and strategy several ideas put forward by Antonio Gramsci are relied upon heavily. *"On the Nature and Need for a Revolutionary Party."* Also presented at the Marxist Activist Philosophers meeting, this paper argues that a revolutionary party is necessary in the struggle for socialism and concentrates on the fundamental question of how to go about the process of beginning to build such a party.

## RADICAL PHILOSOPHY, No. 11 (Summer 1975)

*"Belgrade Protest."* This letter from 8 Belgrade philosophy professors, originally sent to the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, reports on the continued harassment of philosophers in Yugoslavia. PAUL FEYERABEND, *"How to Defend Society Against Science."* This indictment of science and its ideological commitment effectively points out its supporting function in bourgeois society. The equation of science with enlightenment, its exception from criticism, and its inhibition of freedom of thought are just a few of the issues discussed. ROBERT ECCLESHALL, *"Technology and Liberation."* This essay stresses the liberating potential of technology. Rejecting both Roszak and Marcuse the reader is urged to turn to Marx's *Grundrisse* where technology is understood as providing the material basis for work as non-alienated activity. GABRIEL JOSIPOVICI, *"The Importance of Stockhausen's 'Inori'."* The first English performance of this work is important as having been equally a mime, ballet, and theater, thus forcing us to rethink these categories and the barriers we normally erect between them. The central importance and function of mime here is discussed at length. SONIA KRUKS, *"The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty."* This second of a series on "neglected or misunderstood philosophers" begins with a brief consideration of Merleau-Ponty's intellectual sources. The rest of the article concentrates on the systematic development of his philosophy found in his first two books, *The Structure of Behavior* (1942) and *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945). The account is divided into four sections: the critique of scientism and idealism, the body-subject and the natural world, the social world, and freedom and history. *"Film and Popular Memory: An Interview with Michel Foucault."* ROSA & CHARLEY PARKIN, *"Peter Rabbit and the Grundrisse."* A Marxist interpretation of *Peter Rabbit* contending that the work marks a watershed in Potter's philosophical development.

## RADICAL SCIENCE JOURNAL, Nos. 2-3 (1975)

GARY WERSKEY, *"Making Socialists of Scientists: Whose Side is History On?"* Werskey

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analyzes the British radical science movements of the 30s and the present in an effort to determine the direction and program the movement should adopt for the future. Much of his article is devoted to a criticism of Hilary and Steven Rose's "The Radicalisation of Science," as he believes that the Roses' represent an important ideological tendency within the scientists' movement in Britain. He finds their analysis of the 30s movement and the present too abstract (geared to the circumstances of academic research only), too mechanistic (expecting the automatic development of radical consciousness among scientists as their work becomes proletarianized), and too complacent about the content of socialism. Focusing on the effect of the Communist Party of Great Britain, with its ties to the Soviet-controlled Third International, Werskey's analysis of the radical science movement in the 30s highlights certain "negative" lessons for the future movement. The failure of the movement is attributed in part to a naive belief in science, which resulted in policies which encouraged the equating of socialism with scientific domination and an unquestioning acceptance of the bourgeois content of scientific skills and programs. However, Werskey maintains that the principal reason for the failure of the 30s movement, as well as for the inadequacies of the Roses' analysis and the programs of the present movement, is the tendency to homogenize science, to view it as the activity of academic scientists only. This lends to any radical science movement an abstract analysis and elitist program which neglects science as it is practiced in industry and government, by engineers, technicians, and students. For the radical scientists' movement in the future, Werskey advances some standard and rather vacuous proposals: the inclusion into the movement's "intended constituency" of scientific workers outside academia, and the development of a more sophisticated theory of radical science, with attention to a re-evaluation of "science" and socialism. SHEILA YOUNG, *"The Politics of Abortion: Women and the Crisis in the National Health Service."* Drawing on Marcuse's notion of the nature of progressive movements in a repressive society, Young argues that "the 1967 Abortion Law [in Britain] and its implementation by the medical profession is a form of repressive desublimation; that is, it gives to the women the subjective feeling of greater control over her sexuality whilst—when seeking an abortion—she is still in fact in the role of a supplicant before a powerful expert." Young uses an empirical study of general practitioners' attitudes to abortions, with a political perspective derived mainly from the women's movement, to illustrate how medicine plays its part in reinforcing women's passive and subordinate role in society. A woman can request an abortion, but she has no legal rights to demand one; the final decision rests entirely with the doctor, who is loosely guided by the grounds for legal abortion stipulated by law. Doctors perceive themselves as "impartial judges" making purely medical decisions with regard to abortions. Yet, as Young demonstrates, doctors' attitudes exhibit an interest in maintaining the present social structure, in particular the conventional nuclear family, as well as their own powerful and prestigious status as doctors. In fact, the more a man is or can appear to be pathetic and contrite with regard to her pregnancy and deferent toward the doctor, the more likely it is that she will be permitted to have an abortion. Thus, the subtle liberal approach to abortion is ultimately as oppressive as a crude anti-abortion line. What is needed is that the knowledge and skill required for the performance of abortions be made available to others besides doctors, so that women's health groups and trained technicians can provide the service. In addition, recognition should be extended to alternative modes of living and raising children, such as cooperative and communal arrangements. ALFRED SOHN-RETHEL, *"Science as Alienated Consciousness."* This is an attempt to unmask and demystify the ahistorical, timeless, universal claims of mathematics and science, because, as Sohn-Rethel puts it, the special claims of these intellectual formations play an important role in justifying and hence maintaining the distinction between mental and manual labor—a crucial distinction in maintaining an authoritarian and hierarchical social order. Unlike some other socialist analysts of science, Sohn-Rethel does not interpret science *as* ideology; he holds that science has objective validity, it accomplishes tasks of social necessity, but it does this with a socially-necessary false consciousness—a blindness with regard to its origins and significance for the separation of intellectual and manual labor (in this sense science is "alienated consciousness'). Sohn-Rethel's central thesis is that the forms of the social relations of production are the *determinants* of the forms of thought; in particular, there is a determinate relationship between the mode of scientific reasoning and the commodity exchange abstraction. His analysis focuses on the period in which he claims that abstract reasoning first appeared (7th century BC, Greece) and on an application of his general position to the scientific theory he considers central to the development of modern science: Galileo's law of inertial motion. In his effort to demonstrate that the "peculiar abstraction" basic to modern scientific thought arises from human action, and not

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from thought, Sohn-Rethel argues three main points: 1) commodity exchange is the *original* source of abstraction; 2) this abstraction contains the formal elements essential for the cognitive faculty of conceptual thinking; and 3) the real abstraction operating in exchange engenders the ideal abstraction basic to Greek philosophy and to modern science. Commodity exchange, which forms the social nexus or functional synthesis of societies of appropriation (vs. societies of production in which the nexus is rooted in the productive activities of people), is abstract because it excludes use and thus quality. For purposes of exchange, quantity becomes the focus, and complete indifference to time and space is engendered. The money system necessary to commodity exchange, specifically, the substance of coinage, provides the link between the commodity exchange abstraction and mind. The non-empirical character of the commodity exchange abstraction, the pure linear movement of commodities through abstract—i.e., empty, continuous, and homogeneous—space and time, and the nature of commodities as abstract substances capable of only quantitative differentiation, correspond to certain features of Galileo's law of inertial motion: its non-empirical character, its abstract conception of space and time, and its suspension of the rest of nature (all of which enable mathematization). Other features of scientific reasoning—e.g., notions of "substance" and "accidents," of functional causality—also arise from the commodity exchange abstraction. The argument advanced by Sohn-Rethel is complex, sometimes confusing, and weak at crucial points. Of particular difficulty is the fact that the main effort of his argument—the attempt to demonstrate that abstract thought and hence the separation of thinking and doing arises from human action (commodity exchange), not from thought—presupposes the separation of thought and activity he claims to deplore. His demystifying of science appears to be another objectivistic and economistic mystification. DAVID DICKSON, *"Science and Society: the British Association Con-Trick."* The relationships between science, technology, and society have been mcuh discussed in Britain, but the nature of the relationships is not seen as a political issue concerning forms of social organization, control, and class dominance; rather, it is regarded as one requiring its own technical analysis and assessment by "professionals and experts." That the science-society debates have occurred at all is largely a result of a perceived need for social institutions to adapt to a new set of social, economic, and political challenges to the British capitalist system. The recent face-lift undergone by the British Association for the Advancement of Science serves as an example. BAAS has been trying to change its image form a "science propaganda machine" to a body which promotes discussion on the problems and benefits of scientific advance. Its emergence as the so-called "conscience of the scientific community" was involuntary (prompted by funding and membership losses) and illusory. PAT KINNERSLY, *"Extracts from 'The Hazards of Work'."* The article consists primarily of excerpts from this workers' handbook, which provides an account of the threats to physical and mental health involved in capitalist production. Workers cannot count on employers or the law to improve their working conditions; they must organize on their own to watch for hazards and take militant action in response to health threats. Hopefully, scientists will come to the aid of workers with gadgets such as "hazard monitors," etc.

**REVIEW OF AFRICAN POLITICAL ECONOMY**, No. 2 (January-April 1975)

Sufferance Wharf, 2-4 West Ferry Road, London E14, England. STEVEN LANGDON, *"Multinational Corporations, Taste Transfer and Underdevelopment: A Case Study from Kenya."* The multinational corporation (mnc) is the agency through which advanced technology is transferred to the underdeveloped countries. In the case of the soap industry in Kenya, mnc investment has resulted in increasing unemployment and regional inequality, has made little (and possibly a negative) contribution to the balance of payments, and has failed to make linkages with the local economy and especially its resources. In particular, the mnc, through its promotion of new "brand-name products" transfers tastes from advanced to backward capitalism, thus reinforcing the process of inappropriate technology transfer. Nationalization and a controlled industrial strategy are options not open to Kenya given the nature of its existing class structure, reinforced by the mncs and furthering their interests. BONNIE CAMPBELL, *"Neocolonialism, Economic Dependence and Political Change: A Case Study of Cotton and Textile Production in the Ivory Coast 1960 to 1970."* Political and economic change in the Ivory Coast between 1960 and 1970 reflects the contradictions of capital accumulation in post-war metropolitan France, transferred to the periphery. The weakness of the French textile industry after the war led to the need for overseas expansion and for state support. The role of the French colonial and Ivorian "independent" states has been to strengthen the basis of the textile companies and their associates, the colonial trading houses, through legislation which gives the industry various tax

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concessions and protection against competing Far Eastern textile imports. While there are emerging contradictions between more advanced sections of the industry which are now manufacturing raw cloth in the Ivory Coast, and the old style "assembly" companies which import semi-finished cloth from France, it can be expected that the state will try to resolve these contradictions in favor of foreign capitalist interests as a whole. JOHN LOXLEY, JOHN S. SAUL, *"Multinationals, Workers and the Parastatals in Tanzania."* Does nationalization provide the answer to the increasing domination of the mnc's? In the Tanzanian case, nationalization has given the government, through the "parastatal" enterprises, control of a significant part of the industrial sector, but on the whole decision making remains unplanned and uncoordinated. The parastatals remain at the mercy of the foreign technical expert or the management agreement with the former mnc owner. The development of an independent technological base requires not only trained scientists and technologists, but cadres committed to a socialist and self-reliant development strategy. Nationalization further means workers' participation and control. The parastatals in Tanzania have, as a result of government control of workers' initiatives, remained closer to the mncs than the workers. PIERRE BONTE, *"Multinational Companies and National Development: MIFERMA and Mauretania."* MIFERMA, an iron ore mining consortium set up by French, British, Italian and German capital, was established during a period when Mauretania, as a source of cheap raw materialis, was being integrated through the colonial system and through French imperialism into the world capitalist economy. MIFERMA has made enormous profits from its operations but has failed to invest them in financially more risky mining projects in other areas which might make a greater contribution to economic development. It has repatriated profits and is rapidly exhausting the reserves in the areas mined. The company has a close relationship with the State, providing a third of its budget. There have been pressures for a nationalization in order to control the company's activities, and these pressures are likely to be successful, but they will not resolve the increasing contradiction between the neo-colonial state and the growing consciousness of the workers.

**REVIEW OF RADICAL POLITICAL ECONOMICS**, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring 1975)

URPE, Office of Organizational Services, Michigan Union, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. RAFORD BODDY, JAMES CROTTY, *"Class Conflict and Macro-Policy: The Political Business Cycle."* This is an expanded version of an article that appeared in *Monthly Review*, Vol. 26, No. 5, under the title "Class Conflict, Keynesian Policies and the Business Cycle." *STEPHEN A. MARGLIN, "What do Bosses Do? Part II."* Individual households tend to spend whatever income they acquire. This does not rule out the existence of household savings but it does suggest that these savings must be conceptualized in terms of the "disequilibrium hypothesis"; i.e., the momentary failure of consumption habits to adjust to income levels under conditions of continuous growth. On the basis of these ideas the author argues that household savings are not sufficiently large to provide a satisfactory basis for capitalist accumulation. The rate of saving is determined elsewhere—at the level of the firm. And, as such, savings are dependent on the hierarchical organization of capitalist production in that the latter allows the few at the top to set aside resources for future expansion *before* the value added is distributed to individual households in the form of wages and dividends. A good antidote to the nonsense espoused by neo-classical economics. JOHN PETENGILL, *"Income Distribution and Revolutionary Potential in Underdeveloped Countries."* A pessimistic appraisal of the potential for revolutionary developments in the Third World. The urban working class is too prosperous (in relative terms) to support revolutionary demands. The rural poor can be easily bought off with land reform—an increasingly feasible option as urban elites establish a power basis independent of the rural elite. As for the urban poor, they have neither the economic basis, nor the organizational capacity to effectively wage a revolutionary struggle. The author's argument is meant to counter the rather simple and economistic thesis that increasing social inequality will result in an increase in revolutionary potential. While his argument is more complex, it tends to be equally economistic. LARRY SAWYERS, *"Urban Form and the Mode of Production."* This article attempts to conceptualize how the factors that have shaped contemporary urban structures are intimately linked to tendencies inherent in the capitalist mode of production. Among the factors discussed are the adoption of certain transportation technologies, the movement of firms to the suburbs, the growth of suburban life-styles, and the depopulation of rural areas. After a short examination of urban experiments in socialist countries, the author concludes by elaborating a number of contradictions specific to contemporary capitalist urban forms. MARTIN LANDSBERG, *"Black Gold and the Reemergence of the Dollar Standard."* The Europeans are being forced to finance

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their oil imports via American dollars and as such they are presently facing a dollar shortage. Moreover, if the Europeans are to avoid the exhaustion of their reserves, a sizeable proportion of these oil payments will have to be transferred back into Europe in the form of investments. And inasmuch as Arab investments are being funnelled through the U.S., the Europeans will be increasingly dependent on American money markets. In short, the oil crisis has provided a means by which the U.S. can restore the *status quo ante* formulated at Bretton Woods in 1944.

## SCIENCE AND SOCIETY, Vol. 38, No. 4

John Jay College, CUNY, Room 4331, 445 W. 59th St., New York, NY 10019. $8.00 annual subscription. H. VELTMEYER, *"Towards an Assessment of the Structuralist Interrogation of Marx: Lévi-Strauss and Althusser."* This article attempts to indicate the negative aspects of the attempt to combine Marx and structuralism. J. STEIN, *"Of Booker T. Washington and Others: The Political Economy of Racism in the U.S."* Analysis of the origin and character of racism in 19th century U.S. P.P. HALL, *"The Model of Boston Charity: A Theory of Charitable Benevolence and Class Development."* *"Controversies in the Theory of Surplus Value: A Reply to John Eatwell."* Two replies to an article in the previous issue which concerned the implications Straffa's theory has for the transformation problem in Marx.

## SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, No. 23

396 Sanchez St., San Francisco, CA 94114. Subscription $10.00 per year. SAMIR AMIN, *"Toward a Structural Crisis of World Capitalism."* A general analysis of the tendencies pointing toward a crisis in the global capitalist system. Amin notes that given the high level of development in the capitalist system the option of socialism or barbarism may for the first time be posed. Thus united front strategy has become obsolete and instead the real objective possibility of socialism should be raised. Describes barbarism as corresponding to the image of '1984,' emphasizing that capitalism as it has been known up to now will be radically altered. R. LICHTMAN, *"Marx's Theory of Ideology."* The author attempts to develop Marx's idea of inversion and reflection and their relation to the theory of ideology. Begins with a criticism of Marx's handling of these ideas in *German Ideology*, noting their ambiguity. In the critique of political economy, on the other hand, Lichtman shows how their ambiguity is resolved, obtaining a rigorous theory of ideology. Closes with a few provisional comments on the manner in which Marx's theory should be interpreted for late capitalism. C. SIRIANNI, *"Reading Lenin."* A critical article on Lenin which formulates the usual criticisms. L. MENASHE, *"Methodology of Leninology: Reply to Sirianni."* R. BODDY, J. CROTTY, *"Food Prices: Planned Crisis in Defense of the Empire."* Documents the connection between the rise in food prices and the attempt by the Nixon administration to increase the foreign advantage of U.S. capital by an incrase in foreign trade of agricultural goods. R. BODDY* J. CROTTY, *"Comments on Block and Plotke: Food Prices."* F. BLOCK, D. PLOTKE, *"Reply."*

## SOCIALIST REVOLUTION, No. 24

DOUGLAS A. DOWD, *"Accumulation and Crisis in U.S. Capitalism."* In a mode of analysis similar to the political economy of Baran and Sweezy, Dowd describes and analyzes the structural economic crisis confronting late American capitalism. A major purpose is to delineate what is different in the current crisis from that of the 1930s period. The inevitable depression that we now face, Dowd argues, is the result of the very means by which American capitalism successfully conquered the Depression of the 30s—militarization, social welfare, aerospace, automobiles, the consumer-waste society, and the overextension of private and public debt. The resulting problems of inflation, the contraction of production and investment, and unemployment—are analyzed within traditional Marxian categories as contradictions built into the capitalist accumulation process. While describing the scenario for the impending "crash," Dowd remains sensitive to the power of the state to avert such a crisis—through greater economic controls and political authoritarianism—yet seems to be convinced that further political involvement will not solve the evolving contradictions of the accumulation process. The article is strong as a historical contrast to the present crisis to the earlier one in spelling out how the former is quite different from the latter, in pointing out the role of labor exploitation, and the instrumental role of the state, but is awkward and sketchy on the whole international or geo-political dimension. NOAM CHOMSKY, *"Israel and the Palestineans."* Israel, Chomsky argues, is confronted with the choice of expelling the Palestineans from its borders or colonizing them within its borders. Either solution poses a dilemma for the minimal operation of democracy in Israel, particularly the

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democratic elements in Zionist thought. Against this background Chomsky examines the claims for national rights advanced by both Jews and Palestineans. Chomsky's goal, not unexpected, is the creation of a socialist society where both groups can live together in a pluralistic sense. Chomsky's lengthy article is a comprehensive analysis of the issues and dilemmas that confront both contending groups in the Middle East crisis, coupled with an attempt to spell out a positive, socialist alternative. JAMES WEINSTEIN, *"The Grand Illusion: A Review of 'Them and Us'."* Weinstein undertakes a Leninist critique of Mathes and Higgins' inside history of the United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America (UE) in which the authors argue that shopfloor struggles have and can continue to provide a basis for a working class socialist movement. Weinstein severely attacks this "grand illusion" as one of the traditional failings of the American left, both practically and ideologically. Weinstein analyzes the contradiction whereby even the loyal members of a leftist union can nonetheless remain committed to the bourgeois goals of American society and its government. This leads to his conclusion that a national socialist party must be seen as a necessary part of any leftist movement in America. Here Weinstein echoes similar critiques made against the insufficiency of participatory democracy during the 1960s. KAREN & MICHAEL ROTKIN, *"Response to Zaretsky."* The authors critically respond to Zaretsky's "Male Supremacy and the Unconscious" (SR, no. 21-22), where he discussed the importance of various strands within Freudian thought, particularly as developed by Juliet Mitchell for a Marxist psychology. While agreeing with much of Zaretsky's article, the Rotkins take issue with his treatment of the nature of the conflict between the individual and society and the relative importance of sexuality. Zaretsky's response attempts to clarify their differences in these two issues and also adds a more general statement on the relation between Marxism and Freudianism.

## SOCIOLOGIE ET SOCIETES, Vol. 6, No. 2 (November 1974)

Issue theme: "Domination et sous-développement." GABRIEL GAGNON, *"Présentation."* The underlying theme of the issue is situated here in terms of a reaction against simplistic linear development theories dominant until the pioneering work of people such as Perroux, Berque, Balandier, Bastide and Frank. SAMIR AMIN, *"Vers une nouvelle crise structurelle du système capitaliste."* Four historical phases of capitalist development (and their corresponding structural crises) are distinguished. The remarkable renewal of contemporary Marxism with its critique of economism is linked to the emergence of a new structural crisis and the example of the Chinese experience which has made possible a reconceptualization of the process of transition that bypasses the persistent "sterility" of Trotskyism. The current long-term structural crisis dating from 1967 is described in terms of two ideal-typical models of development toward 1984 (e.g., barbarism). An English translation of this article has appeared in *Socialist Revolution*, No. 23. BRUNO JOBERT, BRUNO REVESZ, *"La planification et la production social du besoin."* The authors argue that uncritical acceptance of market demands as definitions of need obscures the interaction of the relations of production and the forms of consumption. Further, it is noted that with the extension of compensatory state intervention this fallacy is extended to public projects as well: every tension and social problem is reduced to a new demand for objects and services. French planning is taken to illustrate such contradictions. A "social structural" alternative model of planning is proposed (but not developed) which would focus on the reduction of the costs of growth and the creation of the material bases of new social relations. JOHN O'NEILL, *"Le langage et la décolonialisation: Fanon et Friere."* Fanon and Freire are interpreted as Hegelian Marxists who grasped the basic dilemma of realizing revolution as liberating language in a process of socialist education in which the educators themselves must be educated. YVAN LABELLE, *"Evolution des recherches sur la participation, des années vingt aux années soixante."* A rather superficial and incomplete review of sociological research on participation in three contexts: voluntary associations, rural cooperatives and work communities, and unions and industrial enterprises. The relationship of groups to the economic rationality of industrial civilization is found to be the most important factor in the forms and levels of participation observed. GABRIEL GAGNON, *"Coopératives, politique et développement."* The author's research in Senegal, Tunisia and Cuba from 1963 to 1973 provides the basis for the thesis that while cooperatives have proved moderately successful as technical and economic instruments of development, in the context of political crisis (capitalist or socialist) elites have undermined the capacity of cooperatives to contribute to fundamental changes in the relations of production and social organization. ARNAUD SALES, *"Différenciation ethnique des directions industrielles."* An analysis of the factors contributing to ethnically-based underrepresentation in industrial

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management and the differential insertion of ethnic groups in different types of enterprises is loosely linked to the socialist theory of capitalist development. CARLA LIPSIG-MUMME, JOHN MUMME, *"Le néocolonialisme syndical: corporations multinationales, stratégie syndicale et Tiers Monde."* A critique of the Levinson Plan (and the International Trade Secretariats of Geneva) for an international union structure which would challenge multinational corporate power. The plan is criticized as theoretically and politically naive—a corollary of the strategy of American capitalism which even if realizable would lead to the colonialization of Third World labor movements. JORGE NIOSI, *"Le Péronisme comme alliance de classes."* An analysis of Peronism from 1943 to 1973 as a populist alliance of classes (rather than a form of "fascism" or "bonapartism") which emphasizes the social content rather than the ideology of the movement.

## TERZO MONDO, Vol. VIII, No. 27 (January-March 1975)

Via G.B. Morgagni 39, 20129 Milan, Italy. $10.00 per year. SAMIR AMIN, *"La Crisi dell' Imperialismo Contemporaneo."* This is a reexamination of Lenin's theory of imperialism. This theory is seen as becoming irrelevant in the 1930s because of new socio-historical developments. What remains valid in it, however, is its political thrust against social democracy and the tying together of *imperialism and revisionism*. Amin then uses this political analysis to expose the *second revisionism* brought about by Stalin. MICHELGUGLIELMO TORRI, *"La Rivoluzione Verde in India: Un Primo Bilancio."* An analysis of Indira Gandhi's rise to power from 1966 to 1971 through an agrarian reform and a general economic policy meant to break the political block of rich landowners. Torri gives a very favorable evaluation of Gandhi's strategy and results. MARIA ROSA CUTRUFELLI, *"Trasformazioni e Prospettive della Condizione Femminili in Zambia."* An analysis of the changes in family structure in Zambia as a result of social changes and the mobility of labor power. The problem of women's emancipation is located in such a context. LUCIANO AGUZZI, *"Educazione e Società a Cuba."* A study in the Cuban educational structure in terms of the new revolutionary political aims during the last 20 years. Aguzzi shows the main political thrust of major educational measures by relying primarily on official documents. KARL A. WITTFOGEL, *"La Rivoluzione Sociale in Cina alla Luce del Marxismo."* A negative evaluation of recent developments in China. Wittfogel sees a fragmentation and depoliticization in progress. No mention, however, is made of the cultural revolution, and the article seems decidedly obsolete (must have been written in the early 1960s). LUCIANO PELLICANI, *"In Margine al Problema dell'Estinzione dello Stato."* This is part of an ongoing debate regarding the nature of the State and its abolition. An excellent exposition is, however, developed in terms of an untenable notion of fixed "human nature." ANTONIO CARLO, *"Note Polemiche sul Sottosviluppo Meridionale."* Carlo's reply to critiques of his book on Southern Italian underdevelopment.

## THEORY AND SOCIETY, Vol. 2, No. 2

Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., Box 330, Amsterdam. $13.50 US per year. J. CHAMBLISS, *"Toward a Political Economy of Crime."* Opens with a broad formulation of the cause of crime under capitalism. Capitalism creates the desire to consume and an inability to earn the money necessary to fulfill the individual's needs. Thus the logic of private relations of exchange have the tendency to cause individuals to go outside the market to satisfy their needs. At the political level what remains implicit in the exchange relation becomes the instrument of the general interests of capital and through laws determines what is criminal. The rest of the article fills out this problematic with material from contemporary sociology. R. SENNETT, *"Charismatic De-Legitimation: A Case Study."* Dull article which concerns the charismatic character of a 15th century priest. W. FEINBERG, *"Educational Equality under Two Conflicting Models of Education."* A study concerning the educational process in society. Notes that the western model of education fails when applied to underdeveloped countries. Suggests that the Chinese model for education would be better for underdeveloped countries. A. WALKER, *"Sociological and Lay Accounts as Versions of Reality: Choosing between Reports of the Charismatic Renewal Movement Amongst Roman Catholics."* Ethnomethodological article which examines the implications of different subjects' perception of social events. P. PICCONE, *"Reading the* Grundrisse*: Beyond Orthodox Marxism."* This article attempts to outline the implications the *Grundrisse* has for understanding late capitalism. Piccone also shows the implicit *Diamat* interpretation contained in the introduction by the translator Martin Nicolaus. MARTIN JAY, *"On Russell Jacoby."* Response to Jacoby's review of Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination* in a previous issue of this journal. RUSSELL JACOBY, *"On Martin Jay."* Reply to Jay.

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by Jean Baudrillard

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